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RENAISSANCE

4 / SUI JURIS



Europe
COMICS

RENAISSANCE

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JULES VERNE TOWER COMPLEX, PARIS, YEAR 2104.

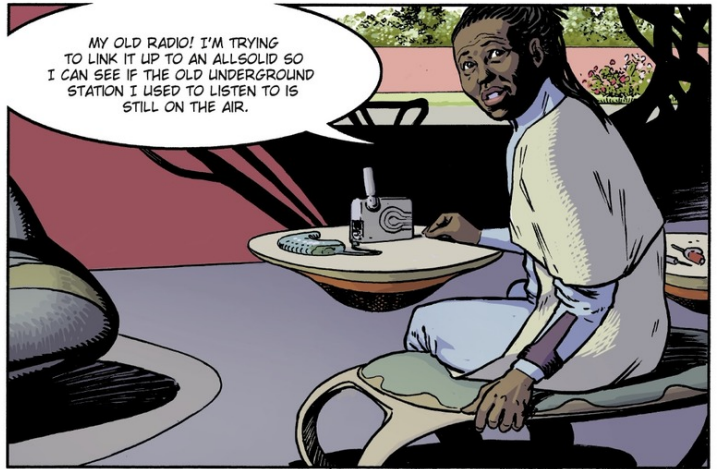


WHAT'S THAT, MOM?

HELLO, HÉLÈNE!

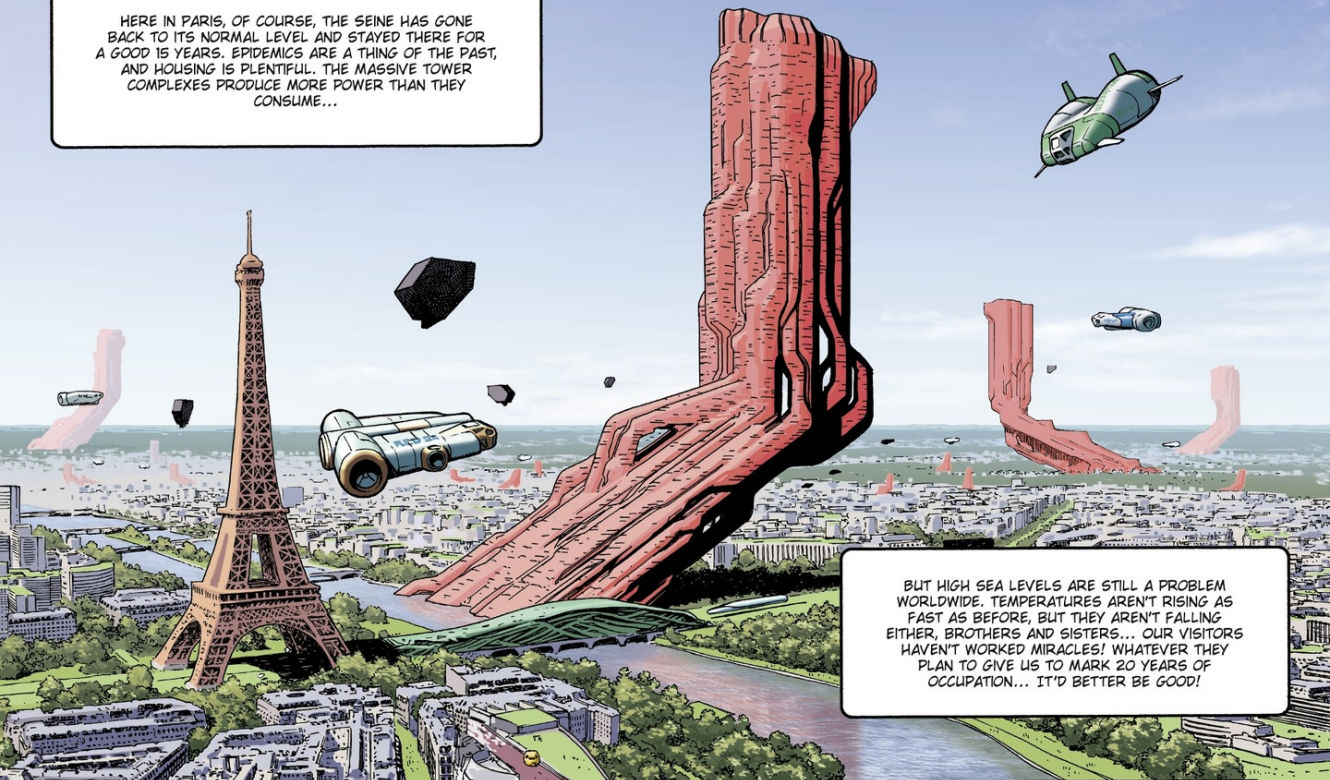


MY OLD RADIO! I'M TRYING TO LINK IT UP TO AN ALLSOLID SO I CAN SEE IF THE OLD UNDERGROUND STATION I USED TO LISTEN TO IS STILL ON THE AIR.



TWENTY YEARS, BROTHERS AND SISTERS! IT'S BEEN TWENTY YEARS SINCE RENAISSANCE ARRIVED! AND LET ME TELL YOU, THEIR RESULTS LEAVE MUCH TO BE DESIRED...

HERE IN PARIS, OF COURSE, THE SEINE HAS GONE BACK TO ITS NORMAL LEVEL AND STAYED THERE FOR A GOOD 15 YEARS. EPIDEMICS ARE A THING OF THE PAST, AND HOUSING IS PLENTIFUL. THE MASSIVE TOWER COMPLEXES PRODUCE MORE POWER THAN THEY CONSUME...



BUT HIGH SEA LEVELS ARE STILL A PROBLEM WORLDWIDE. TEMPERATURES AREN'T RISING AS FAST AS BEFORE, BUT THEY AREN'T FALLING EITHER, BROTHERS AND SISTERS... OUR VISITORS HAVEN'T WORKED MIRACLES! WHATEVER THEY PLAN TO GIVE US TO MARK 20 YEARS OF OCCUPATION... IT'D BETTER BE GOOD!

THE REAL FIASCO IS OUR LOSS OF FREEDOM! DID THEY HAVE TO ERASE ALL NATIONAL BORDERS TO SAVE THE EARTH FROM DISASTER? THEY LET US DISPENSE JUSTICE, SURE... BUT THEY'RE THE ONES WHO DECIDE OUR FATE!

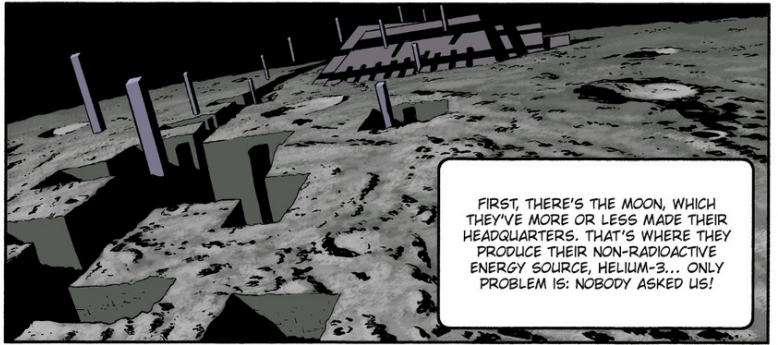


IN THE END, BROTHERS AND SISTERS, WHERE DOES THAT LEAVE US POOR HUMANS, JUDGED IMMATURE BY THE REST OF THE COSMOS?

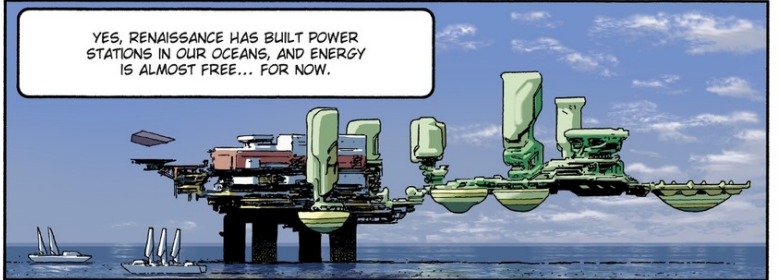




BASED ON THE WORLD NEWS,
THERE'S NO REASON TO RENEW OUR
"SUBSCRIPTION" TO RENAISSANCE!



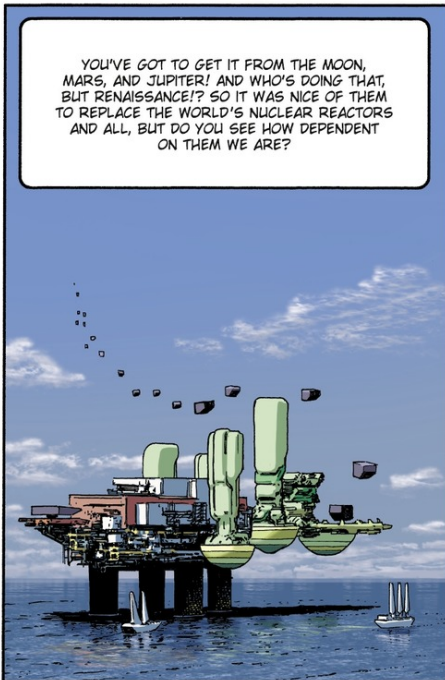
FIRST, THERE'S THE MOON, WHICH
THEY'VE MORE OR LESS MADE THEIR
HEADQUARTERS. THAT'S WHERE THEY
PRODUCE THEIR NON-RADIOACTIVE
ENERGY SOURCE, HELIUM-3... ONLY
PROBLEM IS: NOBODY ASKED US!



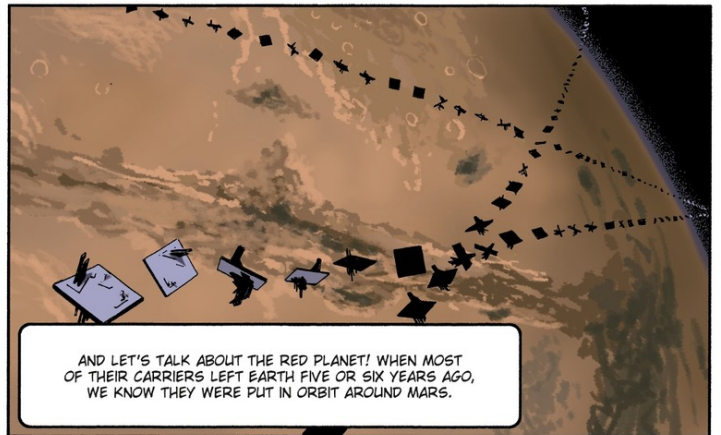
YES, RENAISSANCE HAS BUILT POWER
STATIONS IN OUR OCEANS, AND ENERGY
IS ALMOST FREE... FOR NOW.



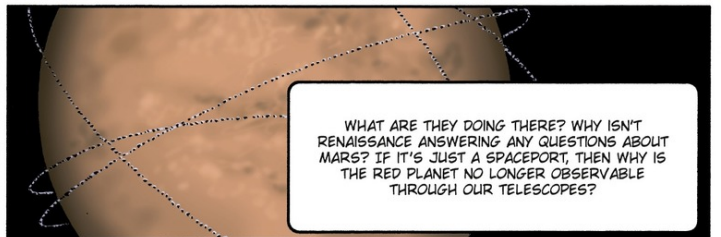
BUT, BROTHERS AND SISTERS, HELIUM-3 IS
EXTREMELY SCARCE ON EARTH...



YOU'VE GOT TO GET IT FROM THE MOON,
MARS, AND JUPITER! AND WHO'S DOING THAT,
BUT RENAISSANCE!? SO IT WAS NICE OF THEM
TO REPLACE THE WORLD'S NUCLEAR REACTORS
AND ALL, BUT DO YOU SEE HOW DEPENDENT
ON THEM WE ARE?



AND LET'S TALK ABOUT THE RED PLANET! WHEN MOST
OF THEIR CARRIERS LEFT EARTH FIVE OR SIX YEARS AGO,
WE KNOW THEY WERE PUT IN ORBIT AROUND MARS.



WHAT ARE THEY DOING THERE? WHY ISN'T
RENAISSANCE ANSWERING ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT
MARS? IF IT'S JUST A SPACEPORT, THEN WHY IS
THE RED PLANET NO LONGER OBSERVABLE
THROUGH OUR TELESCOPES?



OUR GUESTS MAY SEEM FRIENDLY, BUT DON'T BE MISTAKEN, BROTHERS AND SISTERS: THEY'VE TAKEN CONTROL.



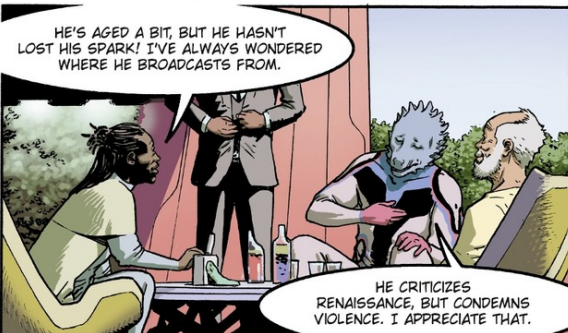
THAT JUST MIGHT EXPLAIN THE TERRORIST ATTACKS ON THE COMPLEX'S BUILDINGS.



BROTHERS AND SISTERS, I SAY THIS WITH ALL THE STRENGTH I HAVE LEFT: RADIO PARIS AND YOURS TRULY HAVE ALWAYS CONDEMNED VIOLENCE. BUT THERE'S NO SMOKE WITHOUT FIRE!



THIS ARMED RESISTANCE GREW FROM THE SEED FORCIBLY PLANTED BY THE AUTOCRATS FROM NAKAN, TORGHON, AND KOBALT!



HE'S AGED A BIT, BUT HE HASN'T LOST HIS SPARK! I'VE ALWAYS WONDERED WHERE HE BROADCASTS FROM.

HE CRITICIZES RENAISSANCE, BUT CONDEMNNS VIOLENCE. I APPRECIATE THAT.



HÉLÈNE, LUC? JULES HAS SOMETHING IMPORTANT TO TELL YOU!



MOM, DAD, HAVE YOU HEARD ABOUT THE PRIME QUANTUM LEAP?



OH MY GOD!



THE FIRST HUMAN
LEAP TO ANOTHER PLANET.
YOU WERE SELECTED?

YES! I'LL BE THE
BIOLOGICAL ENGINEER FOR
THE EXPEDITION!

I'M SO PROUD!



I'LL HAVE THE HONOR OF LEADING
THIS FIRST VOYAGE! TWENTY YOUNG
HUMANS WERE CHOSEN FROM ALL
OVER THE WORLD.



WILL YOU VISIT NĀKĀN?

OF COURSE!



WE'LL START BY SPENDING THREE OF YOUR
WEEKS ON MY HOME PLANET, KŌBALT. THEN
WE'LL GO TO NĀKĀN FOR A SHORT MISSION THAT
WILL HEAVILY INVOLVE YOUR SON. FINALLY, WE'LL
TAKE A CRUISE ON TORGHON, ONE OF THE MOST
POPULAR DESTINATIONS IN THE COMPLEX!

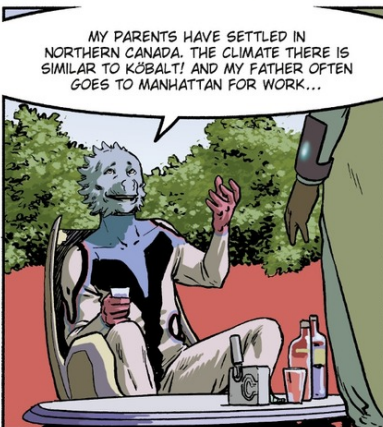


TO OUR CHILDREN, EARTH'S
FUTURE LEADERS! ONE DAY
THEY'LL MAKE THIS OLD PLANET A
CORE MEMBER OF THE COMPLEX!



AND YOU, PABLŌ?
HOW'S IT GOING?

A LITTLE OVERWHELMED
WITH PAPERWORK SINCE I TOOK
OVER RUNNING THE KŌBALT UNIVERSITY
IN EUROPE, BUT STUDENTS LIKE JULES HELP
MAKE THE BURDEN OF ADMINISTRATION
MORE BEARABLE.



MY PARENTS HAVE SETTLED IN
NORTHERN CANADA. THE CLIMATE THERE IS
SIMILAR TO KŌBALT! AND MY FATHER OFTEN
GOES TO MANHATTAN FOR WORK...

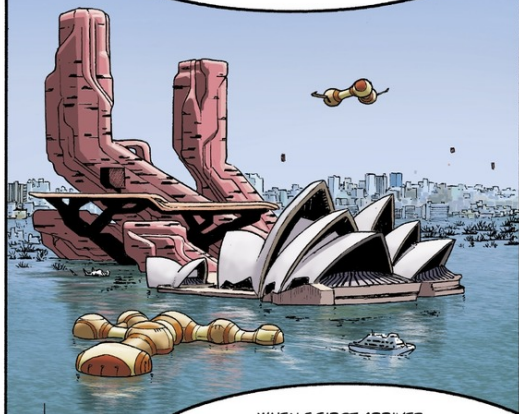


SPEAKING OF WORK,
I HAVE TO GO! SEE YOU
TONIGHT?



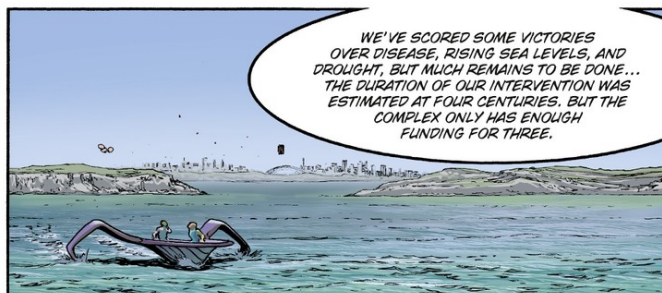
SORRY, HÉLÈNE,
BUT THIS YOUNG MAN AND I HAVE
CLASS EARLY TOMORROW MORNING
IN STOCKHOLM, AND OUR SHUTTLE
LEAVES THIS AFTERNOON!

MY NAME IS SWANN. I HAVE LIVED ON EARTH, IN YOUR SOLAR SYSTEM, FOR ALMOST 20 YEARS. I MISS MY HOME PLANET, NĀKĀN...

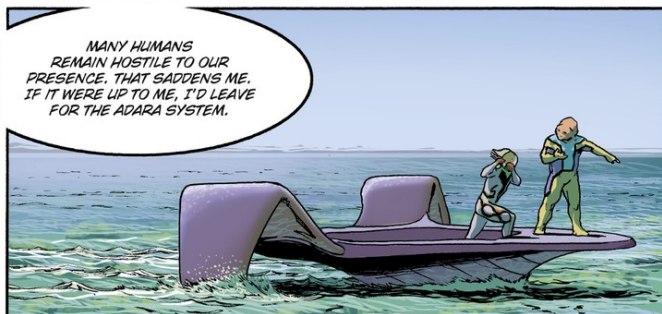


WHEN I FIRST ARRIVED ABOARD ONE OF THE RENAISSANCE EXPEDITION CARRIERS, HUMAN CIVILIZATION WAS IN CRISIS. EARTH WAS RAVAGED BY WAR, MASS EXTINCTION, AND EPIDEMICS. NATURAL RESOURCES WERE NEARLY EXHAUSTED.

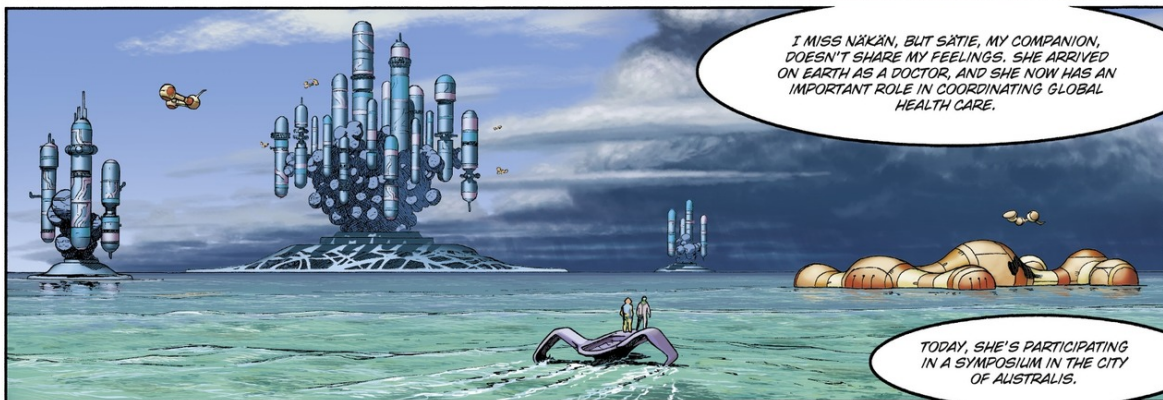
WE'VE SCORED SOME VICTORIES OVER DISEASE, RISING SEA LEVELS, AND DROUGHT, BUT MUCH REMAINS TO BE DONE... THE DURATION OF OUR INTERVENTION WAS ESTIMATED AT FOUR CENTURIES. BUT THE COMPLEX ONLY HAS ENOUGH FUNDING FOR THREE.



MANY HUMANS REMAIN HOSTILE TO OUR PRESENCE. THAT SADDENS ME. IF IT WERE UP TO ME, I'D LEAVE FOR THE ADARA SYSTEM.



I MISS NĀKĀN, BUT SĀTIE, MY COMPANION, DOESN'T SHARE MY FEELINGS. SHE ARRIVED ON EARTH AS A DOCTOR, AND SHE NOW HAS AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN COORDINATING GLOBAL HEALTH CARE.

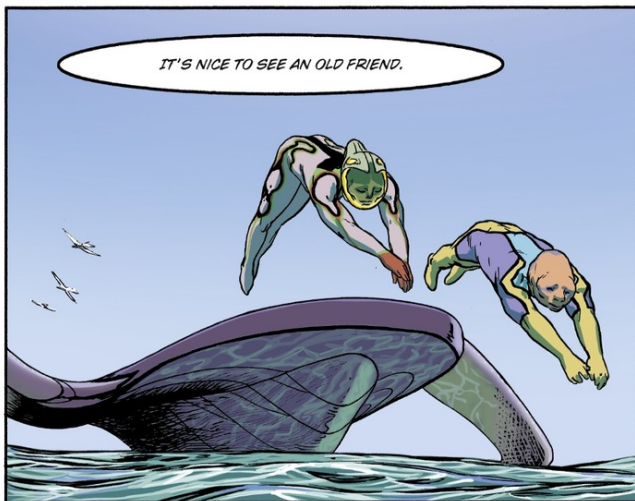


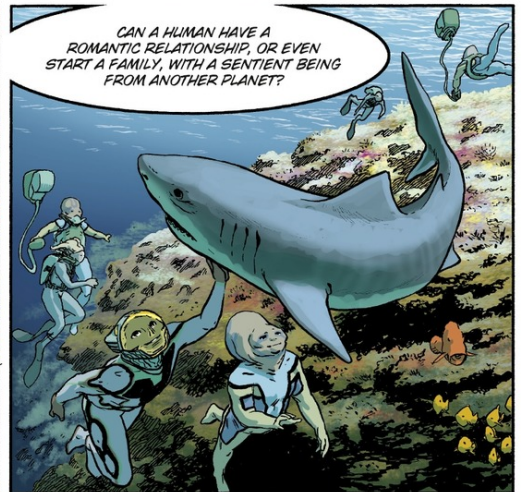
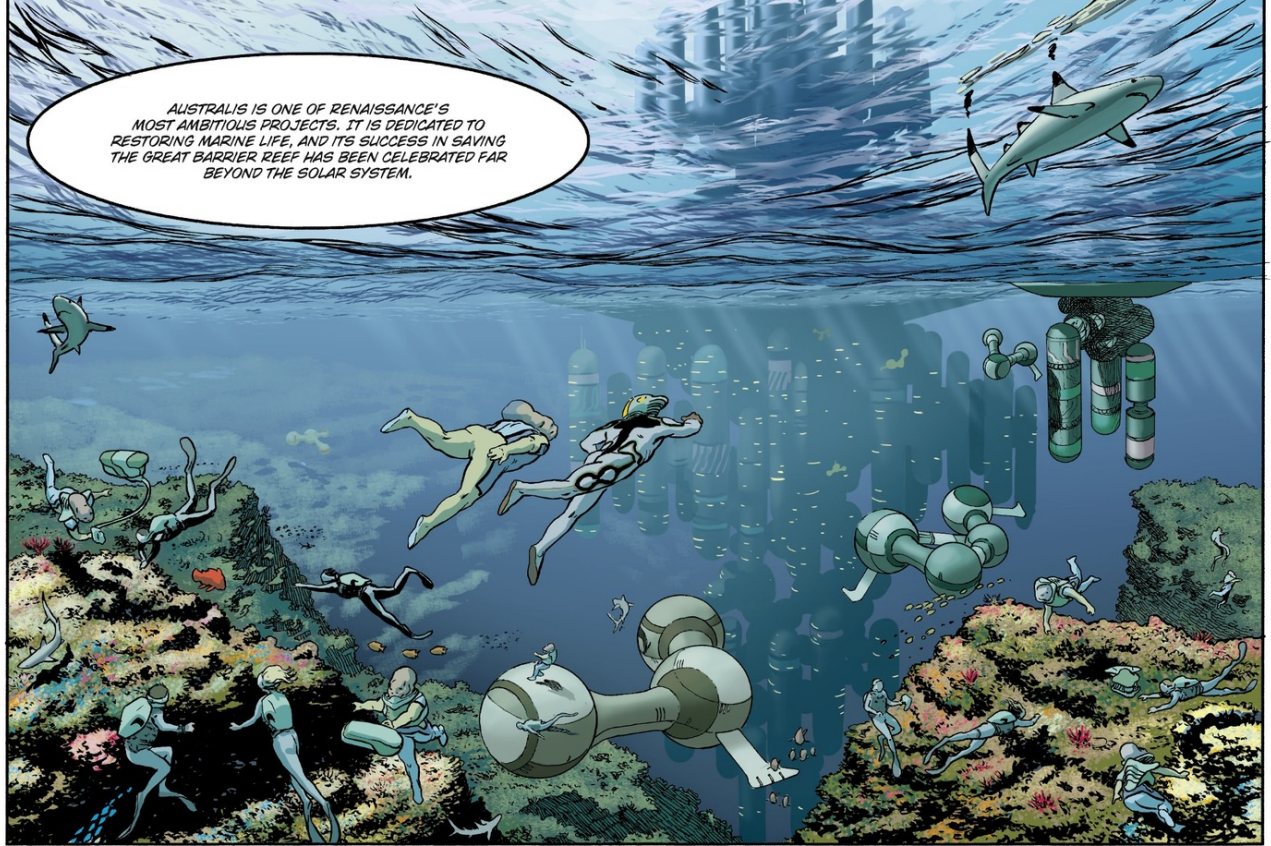
TODAY, SHE'S PARTICIPATING IN A SYMPOSIUM IN THE CITY OF AUSTRALIS.

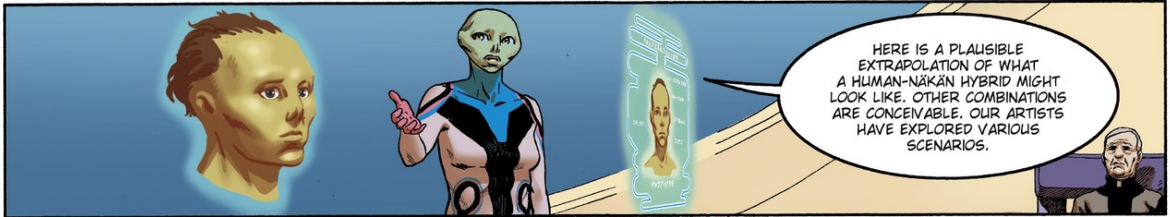
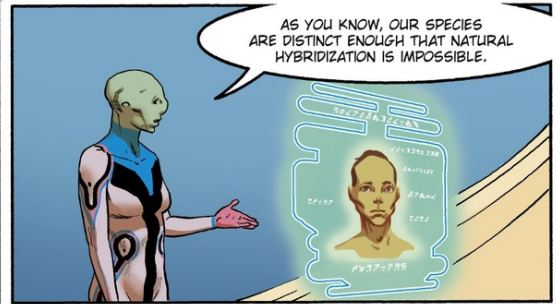
I CAME ALONG TO VISIT MY FRIEND CÖNRAD, WHO RECENTLY ARRIVED ON EARTH. HE'S A TORGHON, ONE OF THE MOST ANCIENT AND RESPECTED CIVILIZATIONS OF THE COMPLEX, OUR INTERPLANETARY FEDERATION.

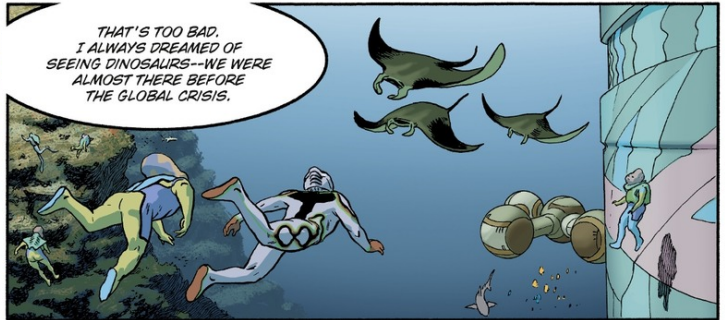


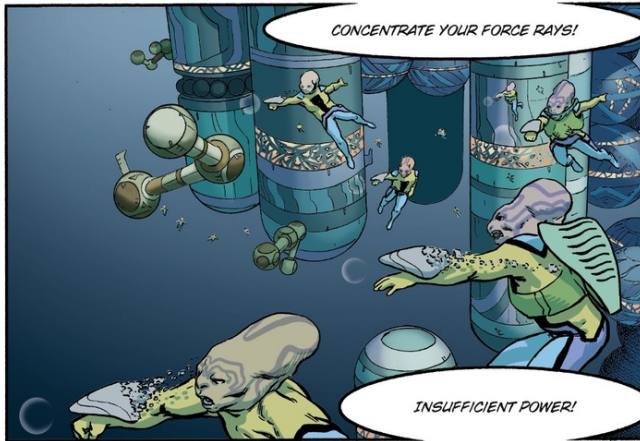
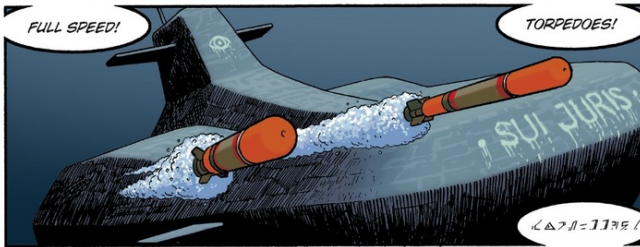
IT'S NICE TO SEE AN OLD FRIEND.

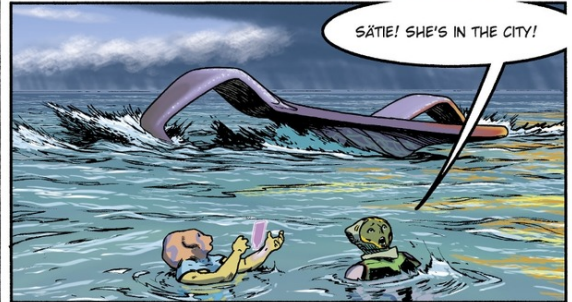














PLANET TORGHON, A FEW HOURS LATER...

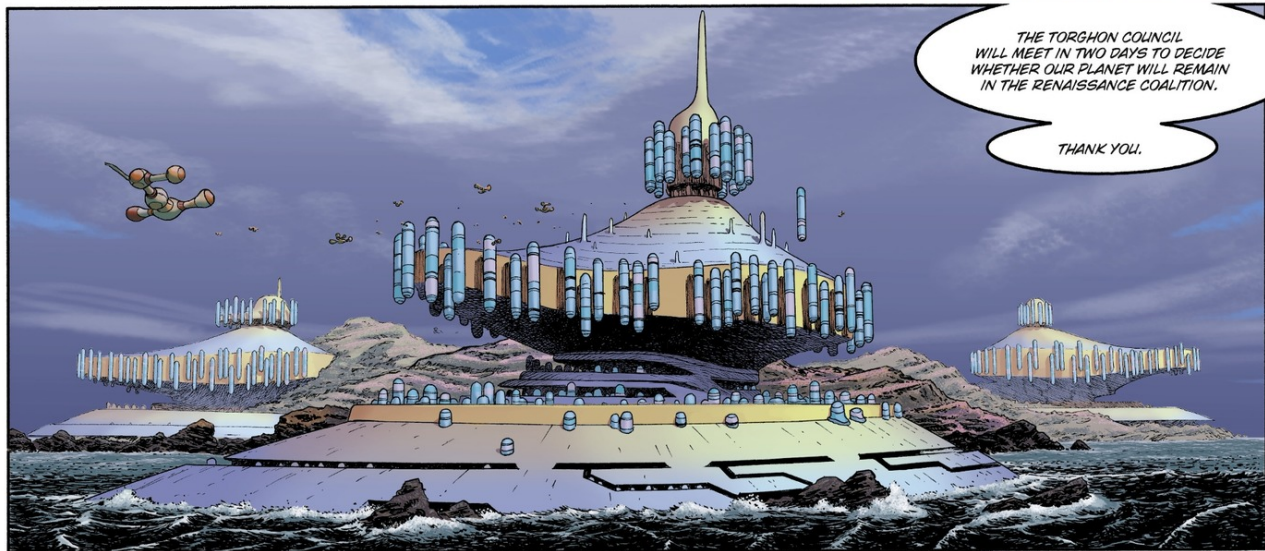
IN TOTAL, 983 DEAD AND 2,567 INJURED. TORGHON HAS PAID THE HEAVIEST PRICE IN THIS SENSELESS ATTACK, WITH 876 DEAD AND THREE QUARTERS OF THE INJURED.



THE RENAISSANCE AUTHORITIES AND THE TERRANS MUST WORK TOGETHER TO CARRY OUT A THOROUGH, UNBIASED INVESTIGATION THAT WILL BRING TO LIGHT THE MOTIVATIONS BEHIND THIS SENSELESS AND BARBARIC ACT.



THE GROUP THAT HAS CLAIMED RESPONSIBILITY GOES BY THE NAME OF SUI JURIS. ITS MEMBERS MUST BE IDENTIFIED AND TRIED IN A TERRAN COURT OF LAW, THE SOLE TRIBUNAL WITH THE AUTHORITY TO BRING THEM TO JUSTICE.



THE TORGHON COUNCIL WILL MEET IN TWO DAYS TO DECIDE WHETHER OUR PLANET WILL REMAIN IN THE RENAISSANCE COALITION.

THANK YOU.



CONSUL, ONE QUESTION!

CONSUL! SIR!

TORGHON IS RENAISSANCE'S MAIN FINANCIAL BACKER. IF YOU ABANDON THE PROJECT, WHO WILL REPLACE YOU?



CONSUL, IN THE NAME OF PLANET SKUALL AND MY PEOPLE, ALLOW ME TO PRESENT OUR CONDOLENCES. IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE ONE OF THE COMPLEX'S MISSIONS HAS COME UNDER SUCH A MURDEROUS ATTACK.

THANK YOU, GARY. TORGHON AND SKUALL HAVE ALWAYS PUT ASIDE OUR DIFFERENCES IN DIFFICULT TIMES.



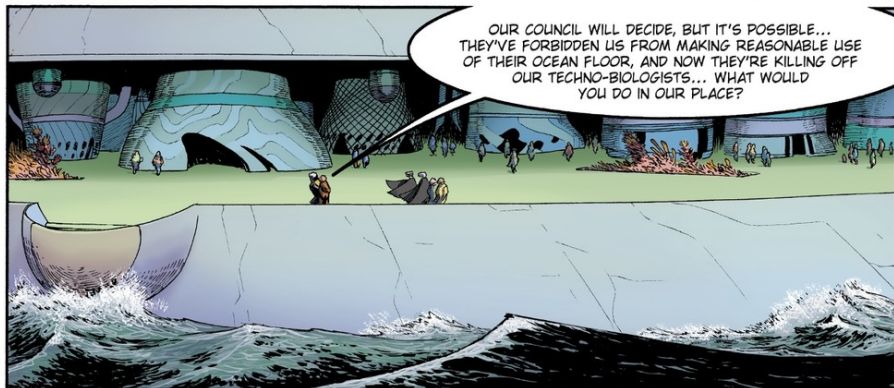
WHEN I THINK THAT HUMANS CANNOT EVEN GRASP THE PHYSICS OF QUANTUM LEAPS... WHAT WERE YOU THINKING, GETTING INVOLVED WITH THEM?



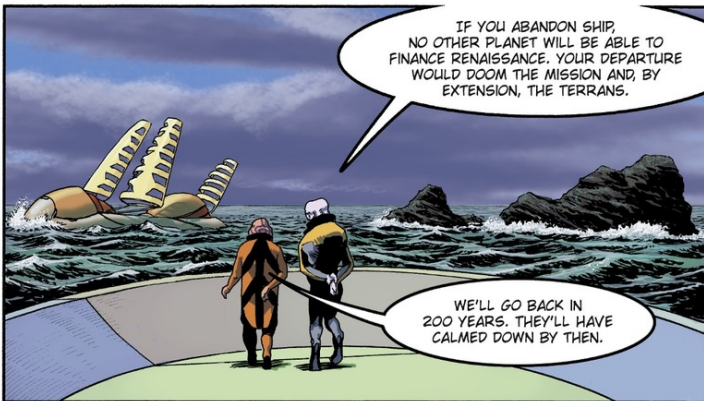
IT WAS OUR DUTY, AS A FOUNDING MEMBER OF THE COMPLEX.



ARE YOU SERIOUSLY THINKING OF LEAVING?



OUR COUNCIL WILL DECIDE, BUT IT'S POSSIBLE... THEY'VE FORBIDDEN US FROM MAKING REASONABLE USE OF THEIR OCEAN FLOOR, AND NOW THEY'RE KILLING OFF OUR TECHNO-BIOLOGISTS... WHAT WOULD YOU DO IN OUR PLACE?

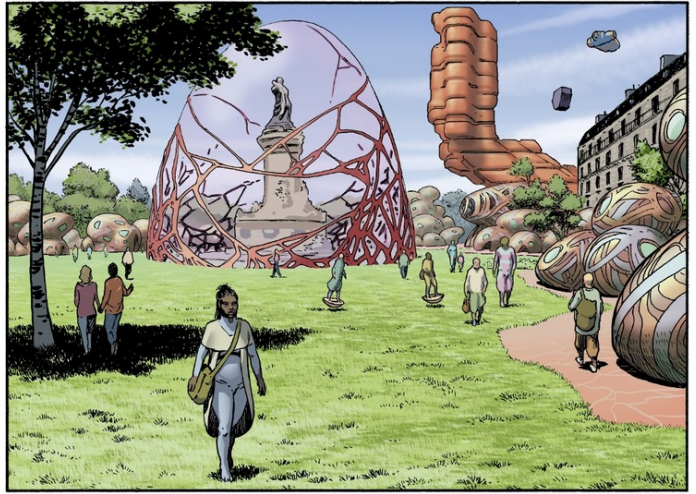
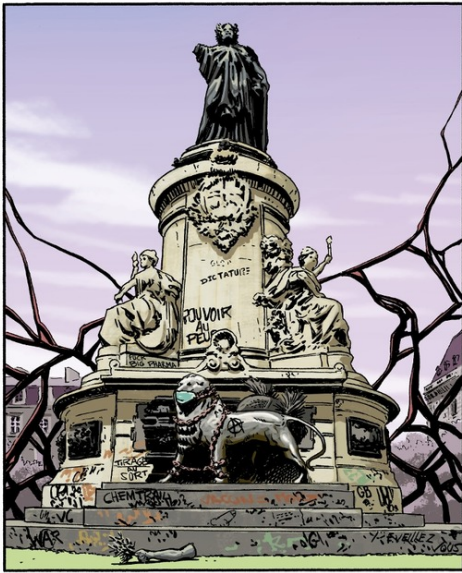


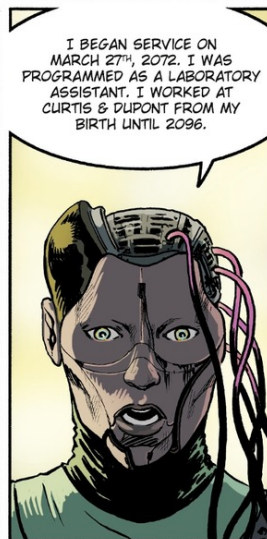
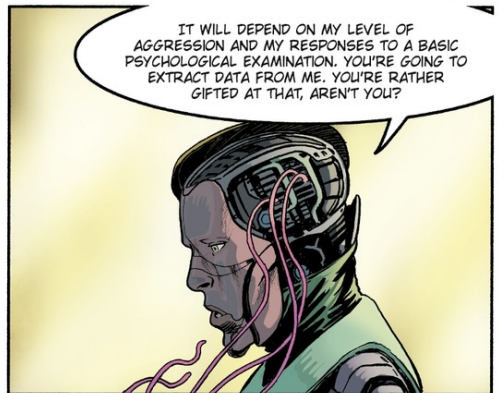
IF YOU ABANDON SHIP, NO OTHER PLANET WILL BE ABLE TO FINANCE RENAISSANCE. YOUR DEPARTURE WOULD DOOM THE MISSION AND, BY EXTENSION, THE TERRANS.

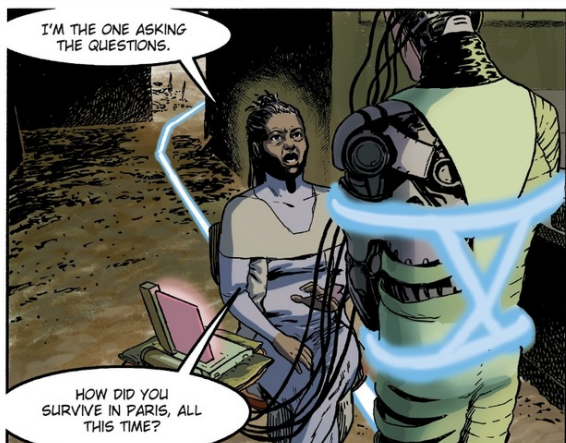
WE'LL GO BACK IN 200 YEARS. THEY'LL HAVE CALMED DOWN BY THEN.

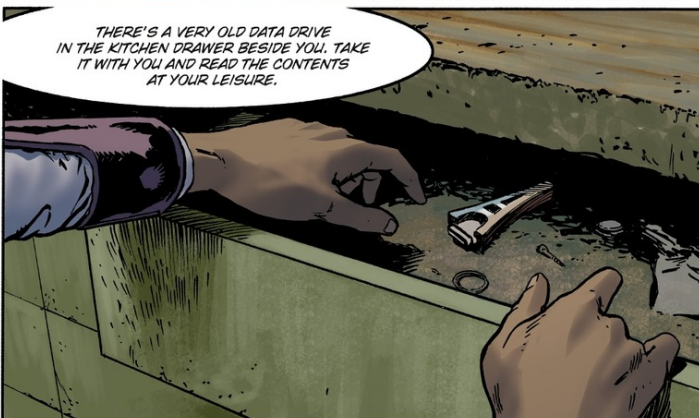


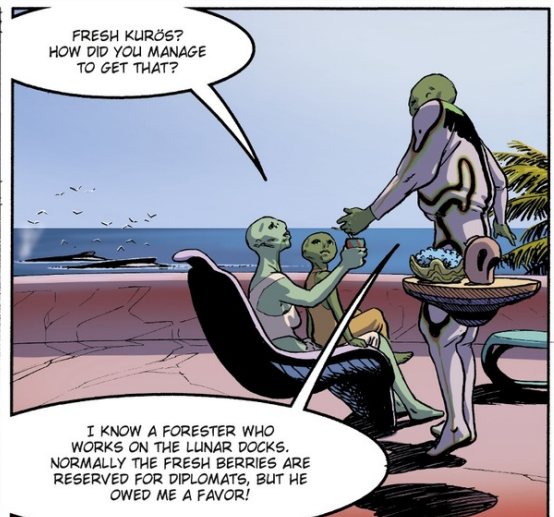
OR THEY'LL BE EXTINCT. WHICH, I'LL ADMIT, AMOUNTS TO THE SAME THING...

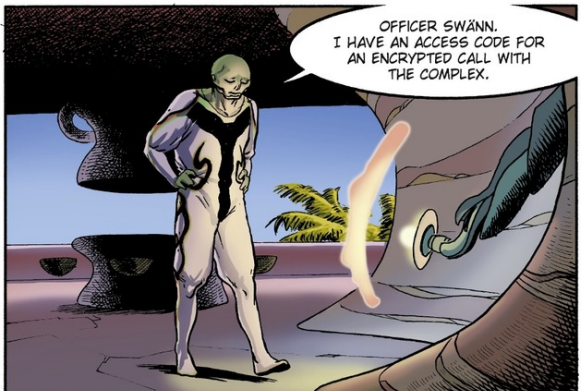
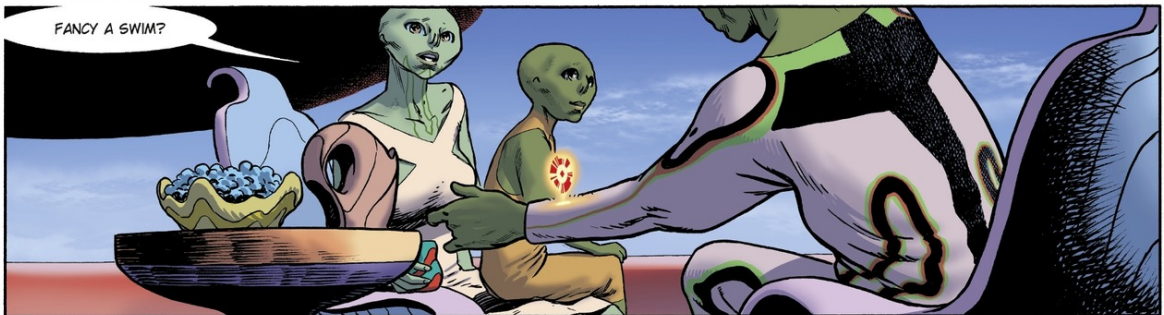
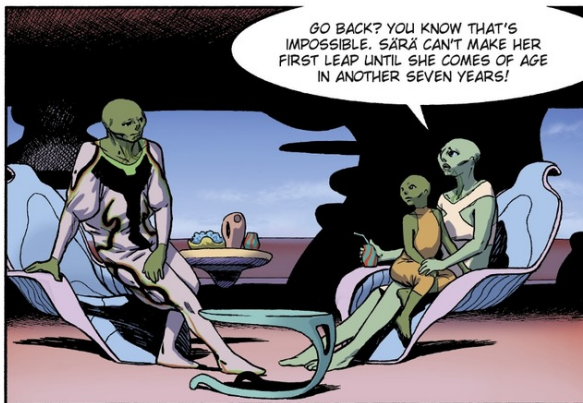


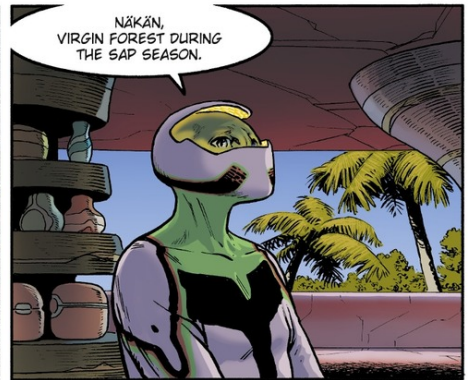
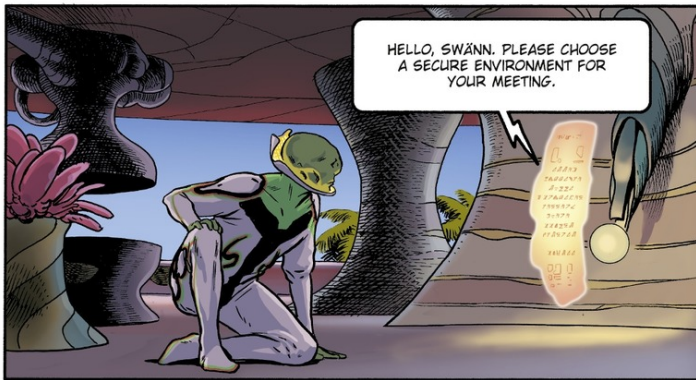


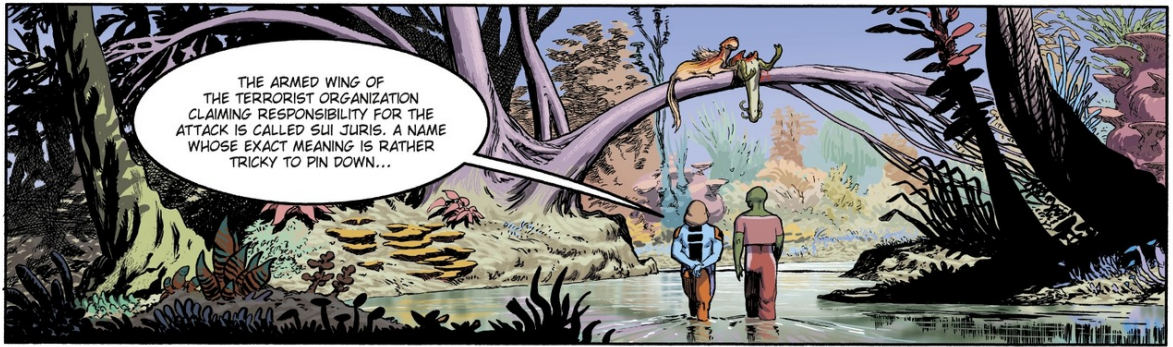












THE ARMED WING OF THE TERRORIST ORGANIZATION CLAIMING RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ATTACK IS CALLED SUI JURIS. A NAME WHOSE EXACT MEANING IS RATHER TRICKY TO PIN DOWN...

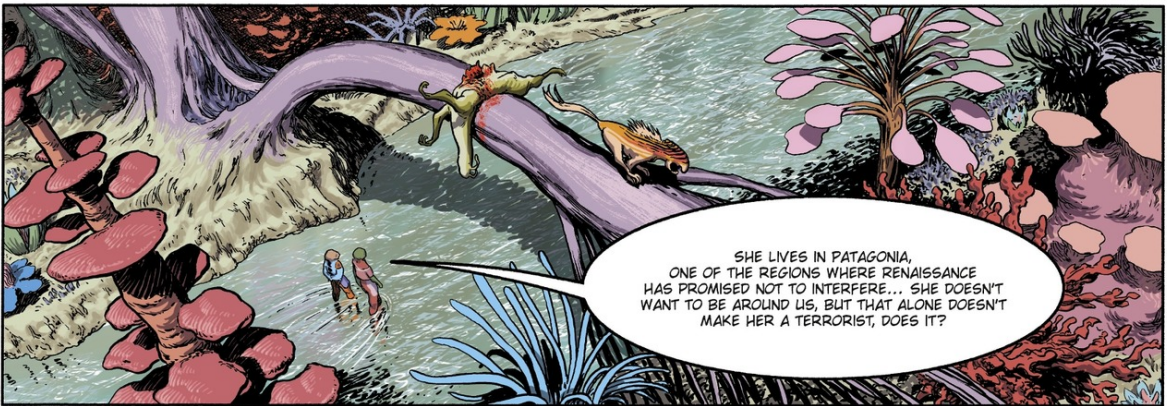


IN ANCIENT ROME, SUI JURIS REFERRED TO FREE PEOPLE WITH THE STATUS OF PATERFAMILIAS: THE HIGHEST RANK WITHIN A ROMAN FAMILY...

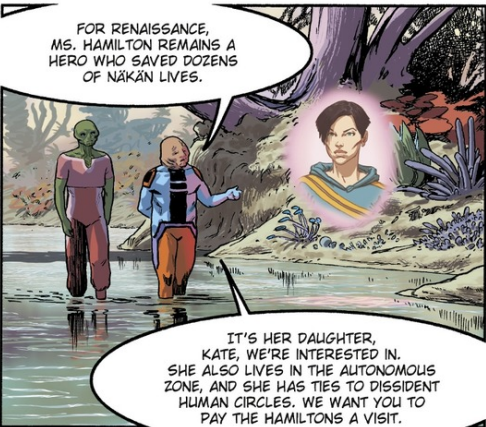
AND IN THE CATHOLIC RELIGION, SUI JURIS CHURCHES HOLD A CERTAIN LEVEL OF AUTONOMY.



IN ANY CASE, THE GROUP WE'RE DEALING WITH IS VIOLENTLY OPPOSED TO RENAISSANCE'S PRESENCE ON EARTH... WHAT DOES LIZ HAMILTON HAVE TO DO WITH ALL THIS?

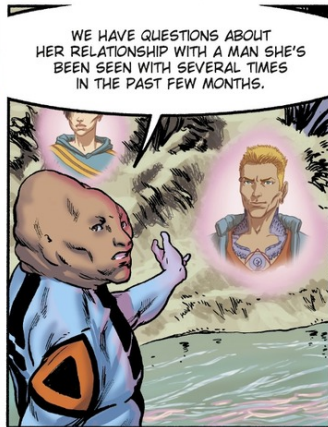


SHE LIVES IN PATAGONIA, ONE OF THE REGIONS WHERE RENAISSANCE HAS PROMISED NOT TO INTERFERE... SHE DOESN'T WANT TO BE AROUND US, BUT THAT ALONE DOESN'T MAKE HER A TERRORIST, DOES IT?



FOR RENAISSANCE, MS. HAMILTON REMAINS A HERO WHO SAVED DOZENS OF NAKAN LIVES.

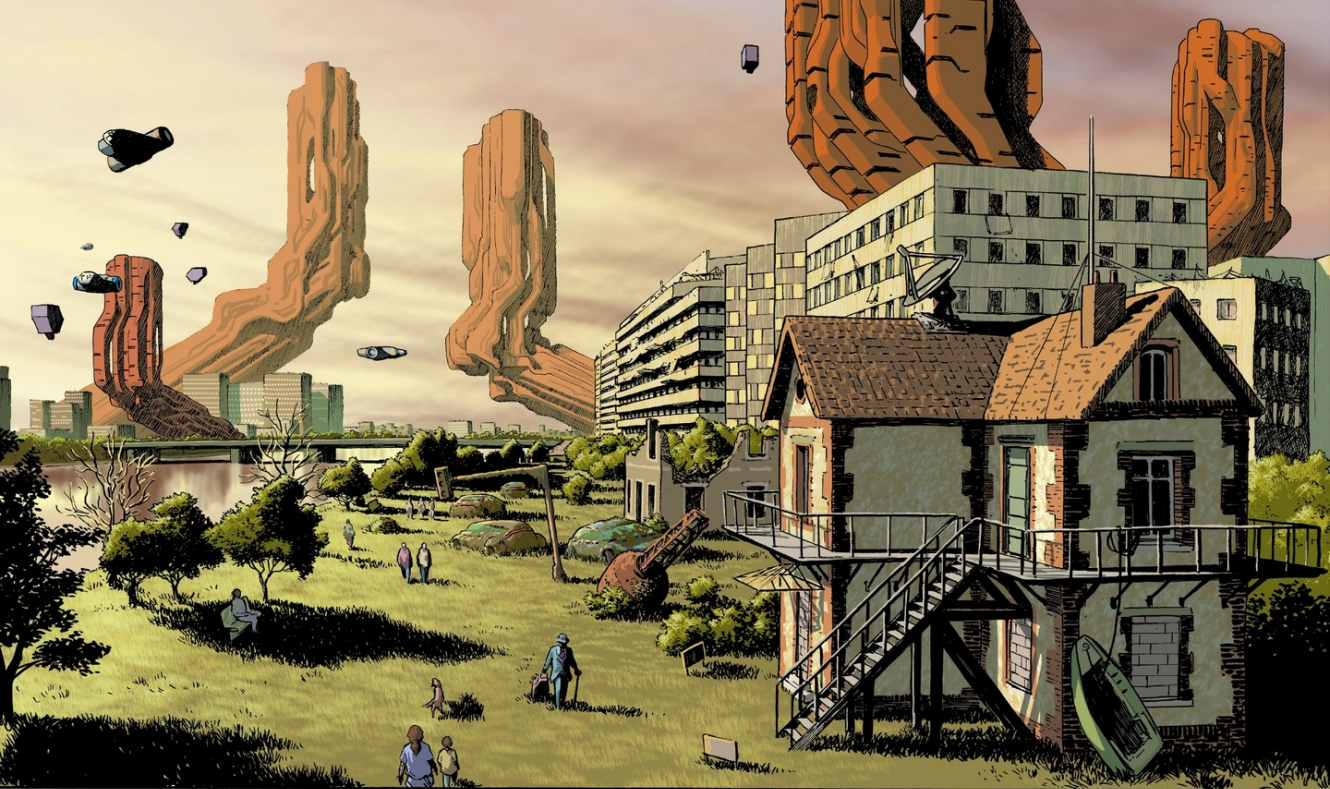
IT'S HER DAUGHTER, KATE, WE'RE INTERESTED IN. SHE ALSO LIVES IN THE AUTONOMOUS ZONE, AND SHE HAS TIES TO DISSIDENT HUMAN CIRCLES. WE WANT YOU TO PAY THE HAMILTONS A VISIT.



WE HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT HER RELATIONSHIP WITH A MAN SHE'S BEEN SEEN WITH SEVERAL TIMES IN THE PAST FEW MONTHS.

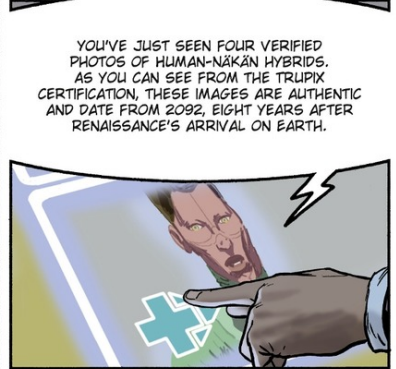
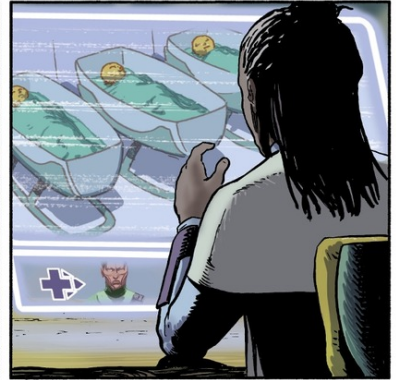


ERIK CASTEL, A SUI JURIS ACTIVIST. TORGHON SUSPECTS HIM OF MASTERMINDING THE ATTACK ON THE CORAL SEA.



*THIS HOUSE IS NOT FOR SALE!

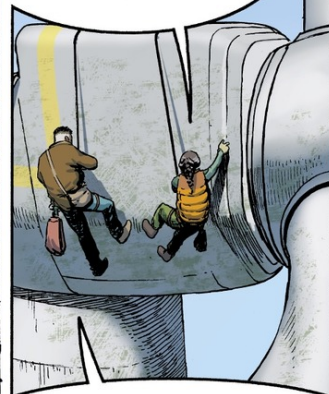




PATAGONIA AUTONOMOUS ZONE,
TWO DAYS LATER...



DAMN IT, WHEN WAS
THE LAST TIME SOMEONE RAN
MAINTENANCE ON THIS THING?
BEFORE THE GLACIER
MELTED, OR WHAT?



THIS DANG TURBINE NEVER
BROKE DOWN BEFORE, LIZ!

WELL, I SHOULD BE
ABLE TO GET IT STARTED AGAIN!
HAND ME A CHISEL AND SOME
DEGREASER!



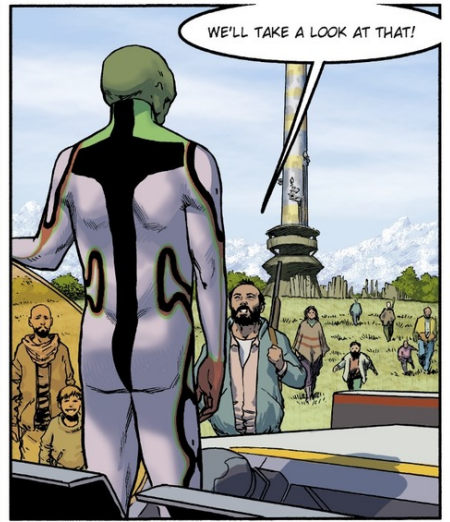
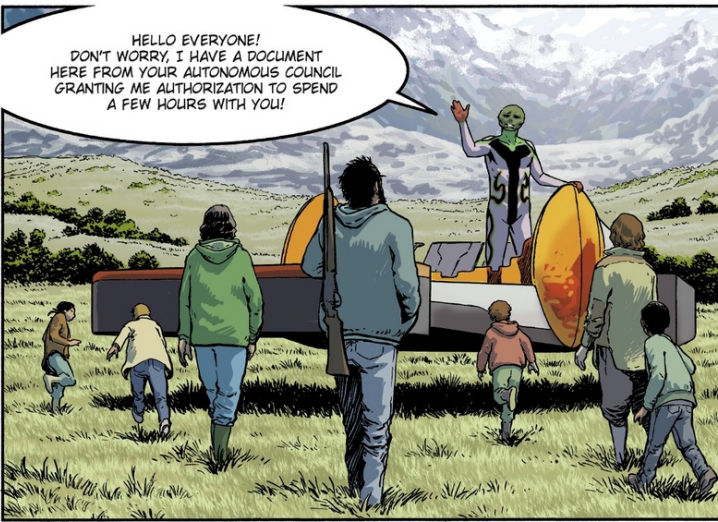
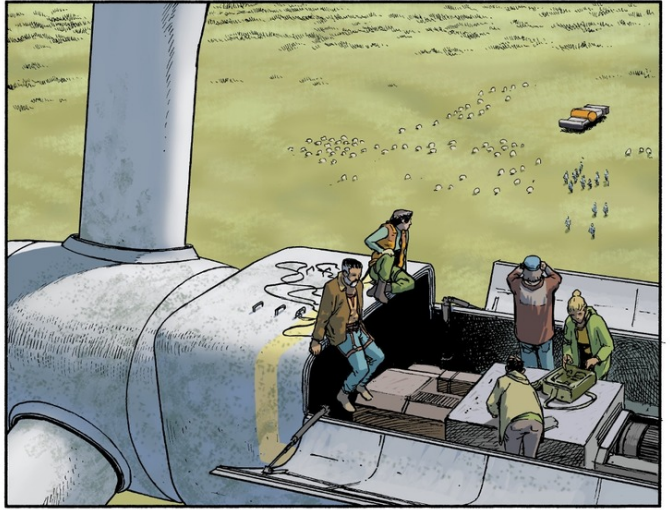
LIZ, CORTÉS,
WE GOT VISITORS!

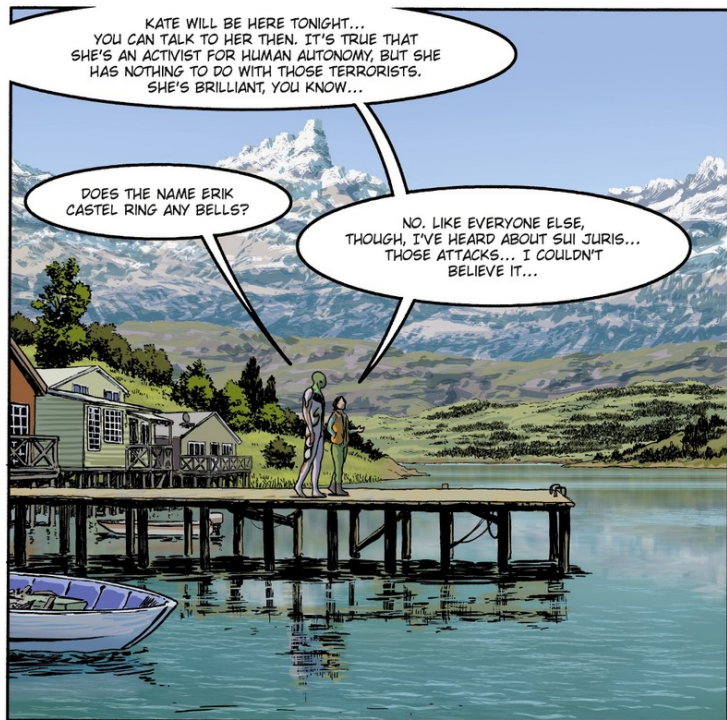


A RENAISSANCE GLIDER.
WHAT ARE THOSE FROGGY BASTARDS
DOING HERE?



LET'S FIND OUT!





KATE WILL BE HERE TONIGHT...
YOU CAN TALK TO HER THEN. IT'S TRUE THAT
SHE'S AN ACTIVIST FOR HUMAN AUTONOMY, BUT SHE
HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH THOSE TERRORISTS.
SHE'S BRILLIANT, YOU KNOW...

DOES THE NAME ERIK
CASTEL RING ANY BELLS?

NO. LIKE EVERYONE ELSE,
THOUGH, I'VE HEARD ABOUT SUI JURIS...
THOSE ATTACKS... I COULDN'T
BELIEVE IT...



BEAUTIFUL,
ISN'T IT?

INCREDIBLE. IT'S NICE
TO SEE YOU, LIZ. THE LAST TIME,
IN BUENOS AIRES, EVERYTHING
WAS SO TENSE...

SÄTIE SAYS HELLO.



I HAVE A LOT OF RESPECT FOR
WHAT SÄTIE IS DOING TO MAKE THINGS
WORK BETWEEN OUR PEOPLES.

I APPRECIATED THAT BACK
IN BUENOS AIRES SHE SUPPORTED THE
CREATION OF THE AUTONOMOUS ZONES...
TEN YEARS AGO NOW!



ALRIGHT, SWÄNN, I BETTER
GO GET THAT WIND TURBINE FIXED
OR WE WON'T HAVE ANY POWER
TONIGHT.

I BET IT'S A PROBLEM WITH
ONE OF THE PINIONS IN THE MULTIPLIER...
I COULD GIVE IT A LOOK?



DON'T FORGET THE
BUENOS AIRES ACCORDS, SWÄNN!
NO INTERVENTION, NO EXOTECHNOLOGY,
AND NO KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER
HERE!



FINE, I'LL WATCH YOU FIX
THAT ANTIQUE FROM A DISTANCE--
NON-PARTICIPATORY OBSERVATION.
I WAS NEVER ANY GOOD IN
ANTHROPOLOGY CLASS...





IS THIS AN OFFICIAL CONVERSATION? I MEAN, ARE YOU INVESTIGATING ME, SWANN?



NO, BUT YOU'VE CROSSED PATHS WITH SUI JURIS AND, MORE IMPORTANTLY, ERIK CASTEL...

THE TORGHON COMMISSION THINKS IT'S SIMPLER TO INTERVIEW WITNESSES INFORMALLY. I KNOW YOU, AND YOUR MOTHER MEANS A GREAT DEAL TO ME. THAT'S THE ONLY REASON I'M HERE.



CASTEL ORDERED THE DEATH OF HUNDREDS OF LIFEFORMS. HE'S BETRAYED YOUR IDEALS, KATE. YOU ATTENDED THREE ACADEMIC CONFERENCES WITH THIS GUY, THAT DOESN'T MAKE YOU AN ACCOMPLICE. I JUST WANT TO KNOW IF YOU CAN HELP ME FIND HIM.



NO.



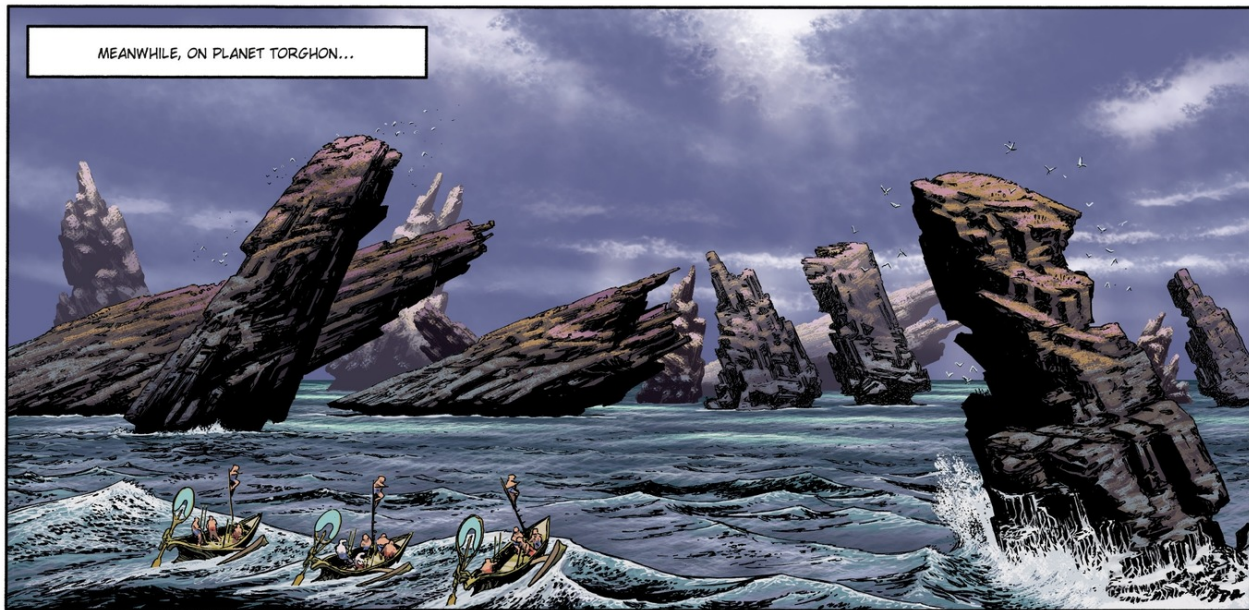
YOU'RE STILL ASKING ME TO COLLABORATE WITH RENAISSANCE...



BUT TOMORROW I'LL INTRODUCE YOU TO SOMEONE WHO CAN. YOU COMING? THE STEAKS ARE GONNA GET COLD, AND MOM KEEPS LOOKING OVER AT US!



MEANWHILE, ON PLANET TORGHON...



THIS DRAGON-FISHING TRIP IS A MAGNIFICENT GIFT, MY FRIEND!

IT'S THE TERRANS WHO SHOULD BE THANKING YOU, GARY. YOUR DELEGATION CONVINCED THE TORGHON COUNCIL TO REMAIN PART OF RENAISSANCE. A DIPLOMATIC TOUR DE FORCE!

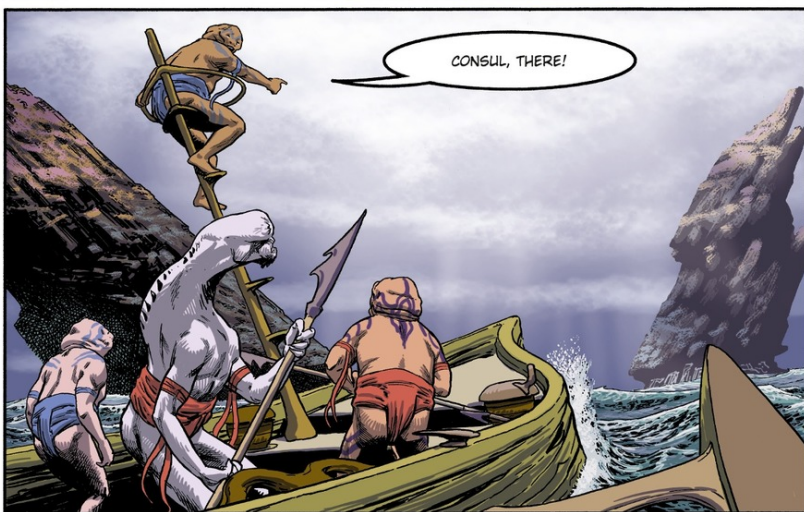


JUST BETWEEN US, YOU HOPE TO JOIN THE ALLIANCE, DON'T YOU? SKUALL WANTS TO START REAPING SOME REWARDS FROM EARTH... STILL INTERESTED IN THEIR PLATINUM?

IN PART...



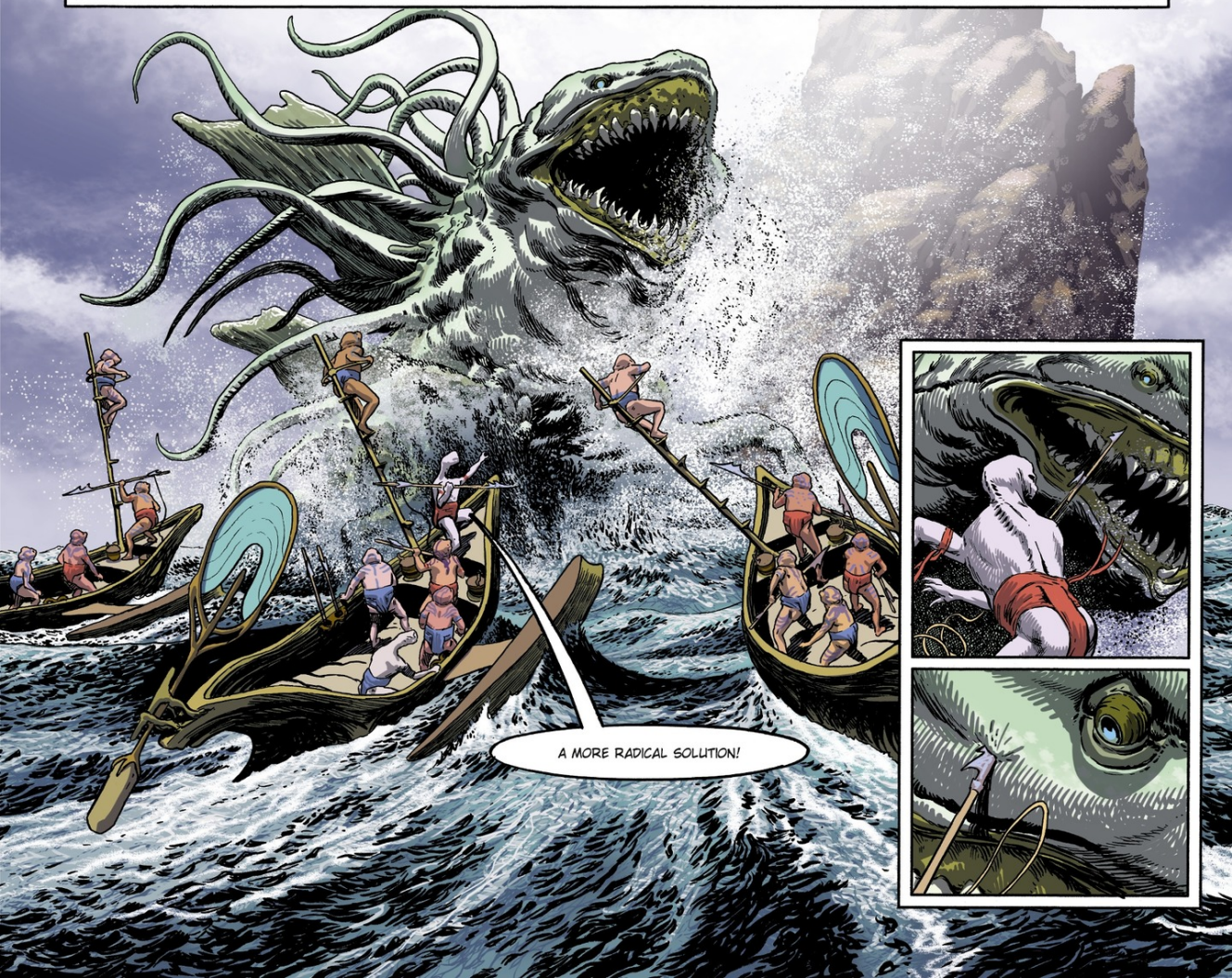
STILL, THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ATTACKS WILL NEED TO BE CAUGHT AND BROUGHT TO TRIAL... YOU'VE SIMPLY BOUGHT RENAISSANCE A BIT MORE TIME...



CONSUL, THERE!



IF RENAISSANCE AND THE TERRANS
FAIL TO NEUTRALIZE THE TERRORISTS,
THERE IS ANOTHER SOLUTION.



A MORE RADICAL SOLUTION!



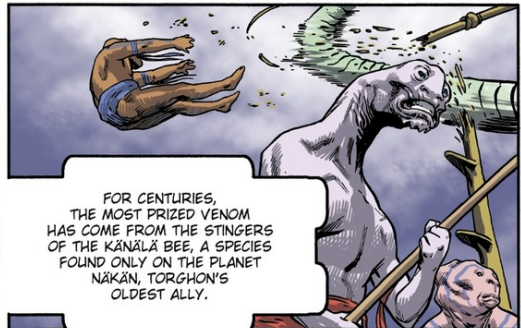


DRAGON-FISHING
IS A POSTMODERN
TORGHON RITE.

THE BEAST IS WILD
AND DANGEROUS. IT HAS NO
CONCEPTION OF THE WORLD BEYOND
ITS NATURAL HABITAT, THE
GREAT OCEAN...



THE HUNTER USES
ONLY A TRADITIONAL HARPOON,
TIPPED WITH POISON.



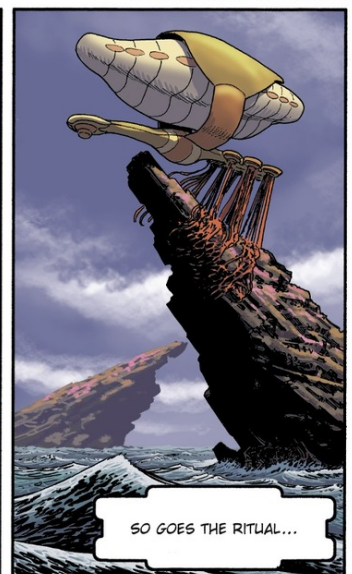
FOR CENTURIES,
THE MOST PRIZED VENOM
HAS COME FROM THE STINGERS
OF THE KANILA BEE, A SPECIES
FOUND ONLY ON THE PLANET
NAKAN, TORGHON'S
OLDEST ALLY.



THE HARPOON MUST
STRIKE THE BEAST IN THE EYE,
ITS NERVE CENTER.



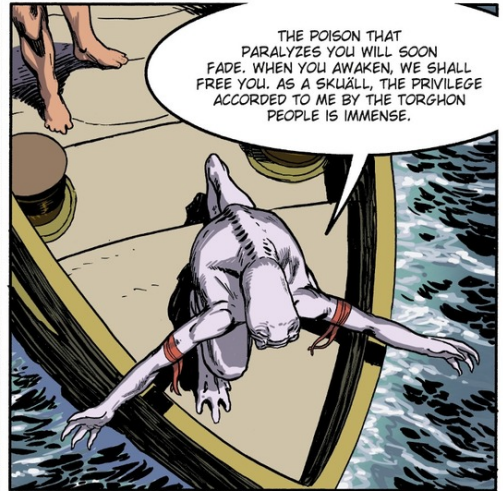
THE HUNTER KNOWS
HE MAY DIE, AND THAT HIS WEAPON
IS NON-LETHAL.



SO GOES THE RITUAL...



NOBLE DRAGON, TODAY OUR HARPOONS DEFEATED YOU. THE BATTLE WAS FIERCE, AND YOU TOOK THE LIVES OF SEVERAL AMONG US. WE KNEW THE RISKS IN COMING TO FACE YOU.



THE POISON THAT PARALYZES YOU WILL SOON FADE. WHEN YOU AWAKEN, WE SHALL FREE YOU. AS A SKUALL, THE PRIVILEGE ACCORDED TO ME BY THE TORGHON PEOPLE IS IMMENSE.



THANK YOU, BEAUTIFUL CREATURE, FOR THIS BATTLE.



THIS HARPOON IS YOURS, GARY. THANK YOU FOR SPEAKING THE ODE TO THE DRAGON.

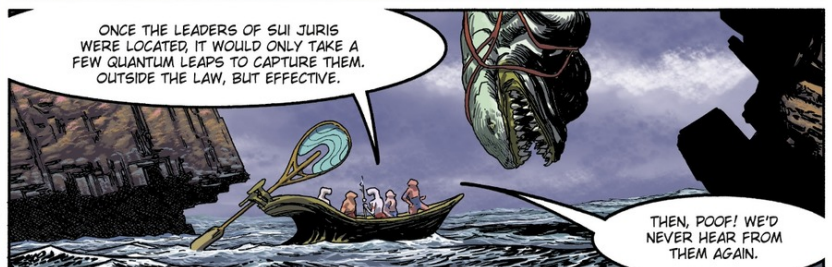


SO... WHAT WAS THE MORE RADICAL SOLUTION YOU MENTIONED? IF THE INVESTIGATION INTO SUI JURIS DOESN'T SUCCEED?



A SMALL, COVERT TEAM.

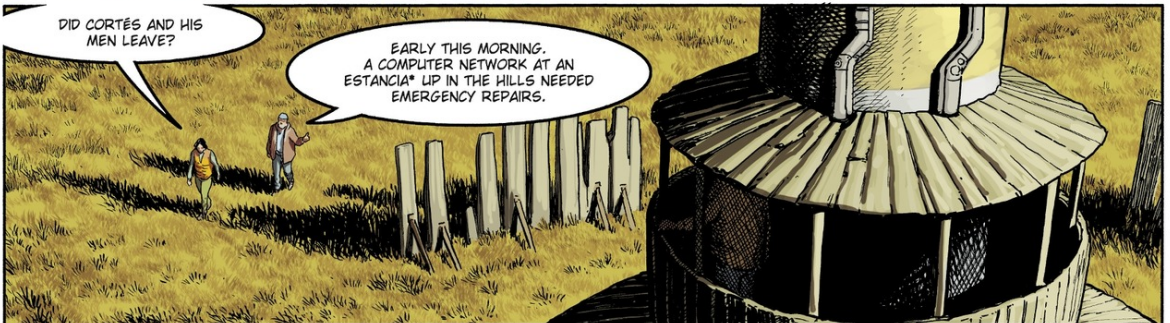
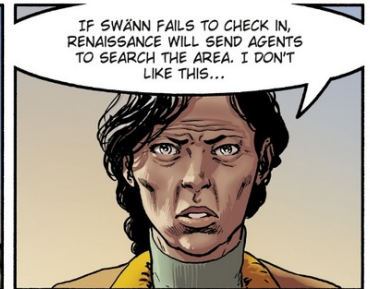
ONE THAT WOULD USE LESS CONVENTIONAL METHODS OF INVESTIGATION...



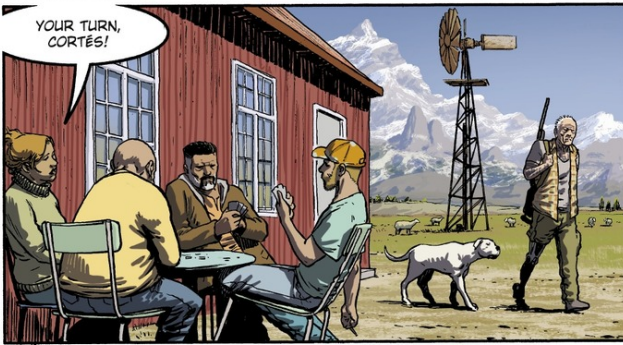
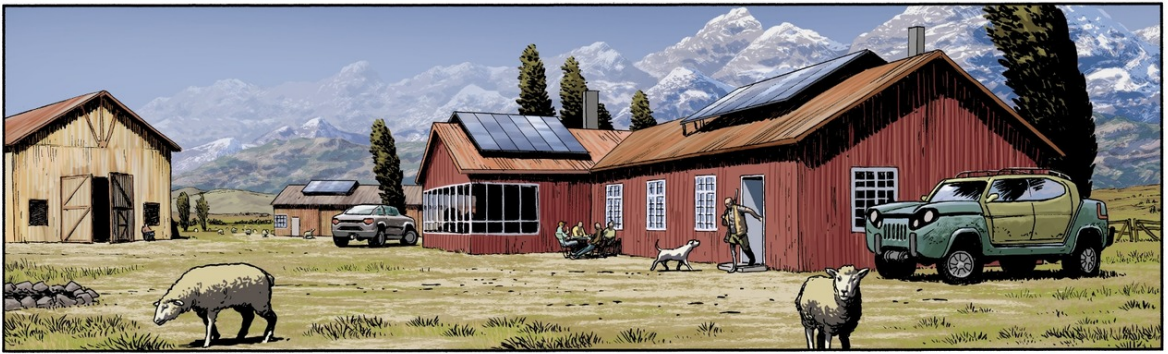
ONCE THE LEADERS OF SUI JURIS WERE LOCATED, IT WOULD ONLY TAKE A FEW QUANTUM LEAPS TO CAPTURE THEM. OUTSIDE THE LAW, BUT EFFECTIVE.

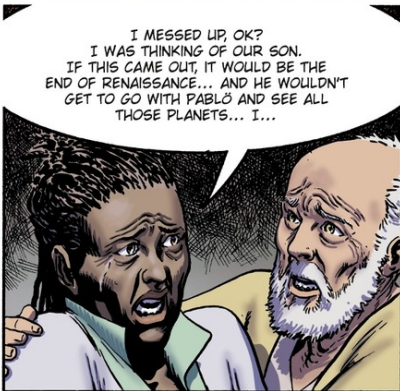
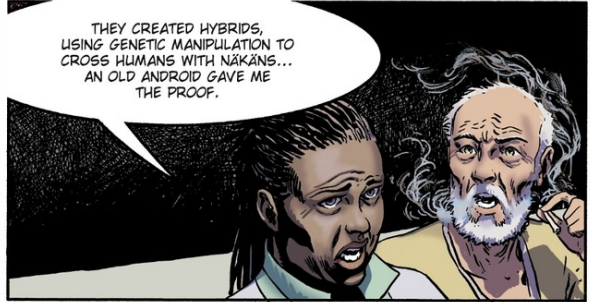
THEN, POOF! WE'D NEVER HEAR FROM THEM AGAIN.





*HACIENDA; PRIVATE RANCH.





DEAR HUMANS, DEAR DELEGATES OF THE COMPLEX. NEARLY 2,300 YEARS AFTER THE EARTHQUAKE THAT TOPPLED IT, BEHOLD! THE SIXTH WONDER OF THE ANCIENT WORLD RETURNS TO EARTH AT LAST: THE COLOSSUS OF RHODES!

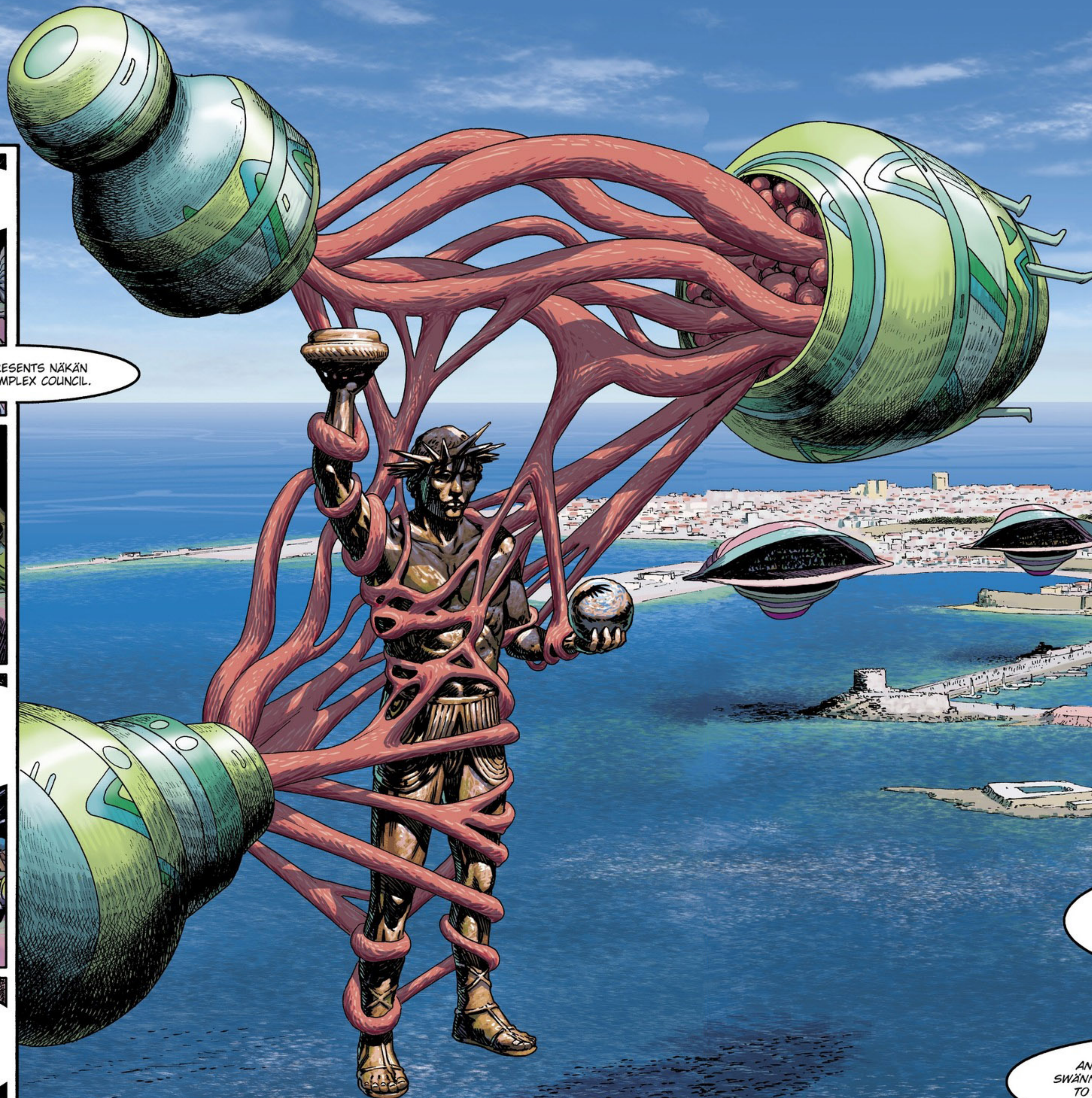
THIS RESTITUTION, AND THOSE THAT WILL FOLLOW UNTIL THE CLOSING FESTIVITIES IN SHANGHAI, ARE ALL THANKS TO THE HARD WORK OF A BRILLIANT DIPLOMAT.

SHE REPRESENTS NĀKĀN ON THE COMPLEX COUNCIL.

GIVE A WARM WELCOME TO A GREAT FRIEND OF HUMAN CIVILIZATION: LISÄ!

THANK YOU, COUNSELOR YAO ZHANG, AND THANK YOU, AMBASSADOR MIRÖ. OUR TERRAN NAMES PAY HOMAGE TO HUMAN INGENUITY, AND THIS WORK BY CHARES OF LINDOS PROVES WE WERE RIGHT TO KEEP WATCH OVER THIS PLANET FOR SO LONG...

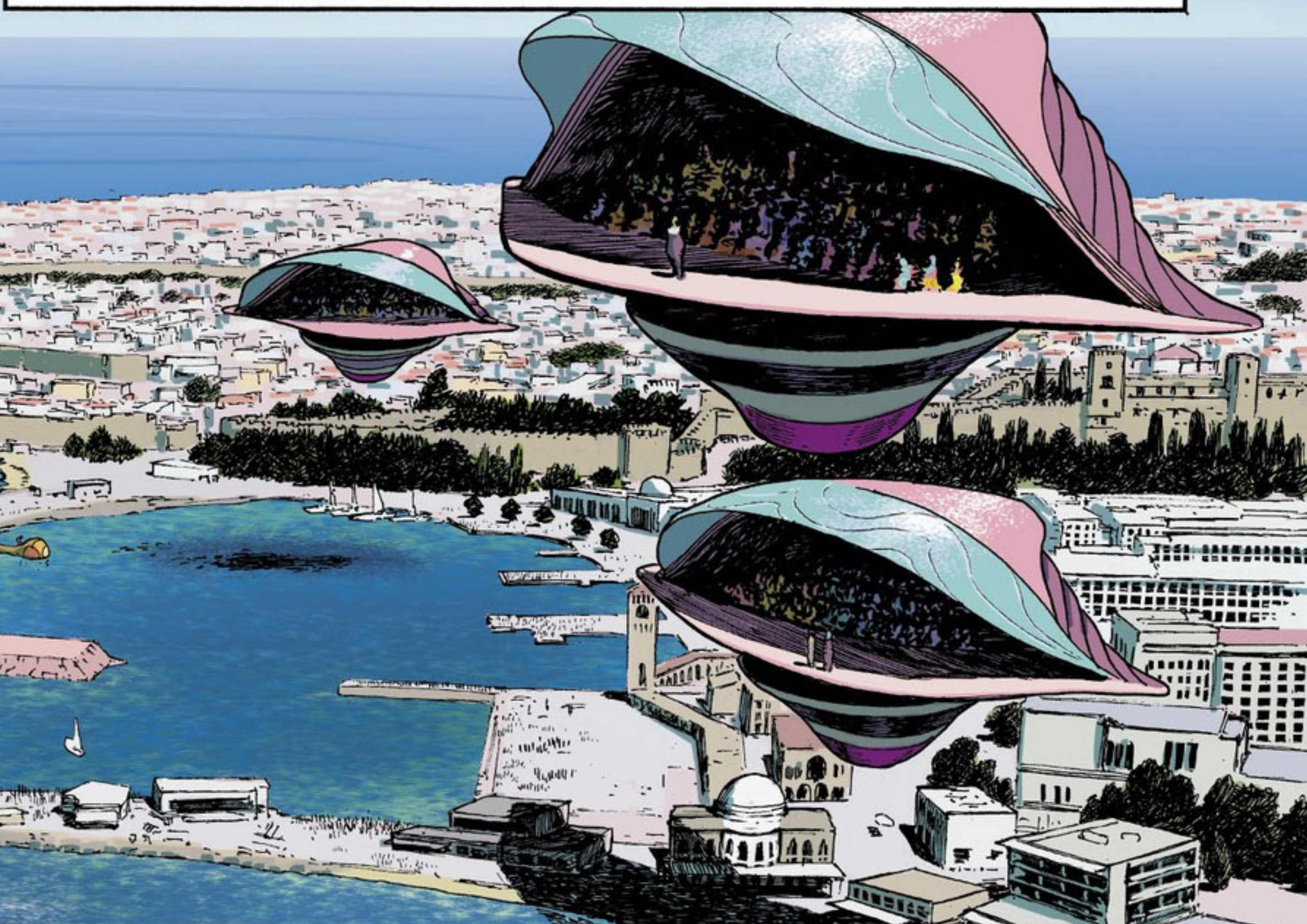
WE SALVAGED THIS BRONZE STATUE OF HELIOS 1,500 EARTH-YEARS AGO. ON THIS, THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF OUR FIRST ENCOUNTER, I'M PROUD TO RETURN IT, RESTORED, TO HUMANITY.



"SALVAGED," "RESTORED..." IT ALL SOUNDS A BIT LIKE PILLAGING, DON'T YOU THINK, CÖNRAD?



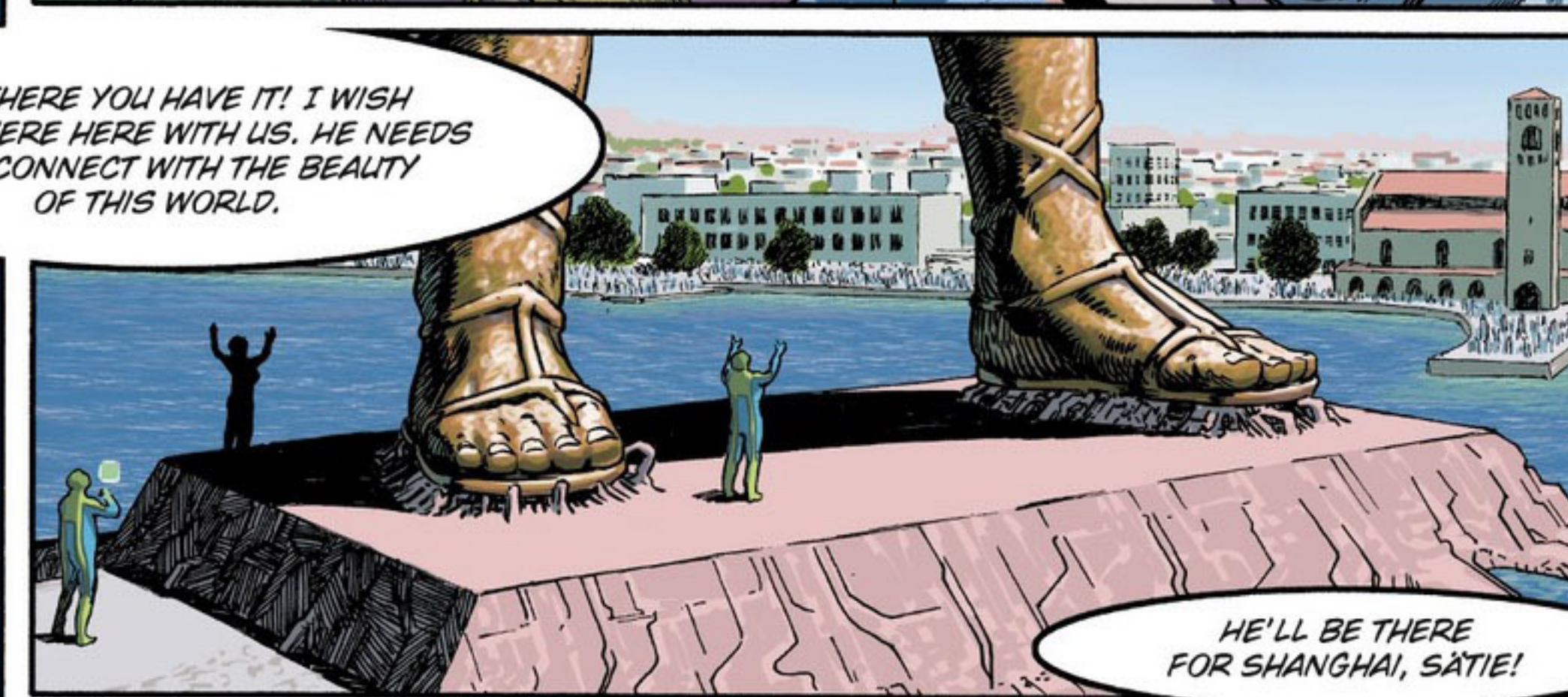
PILLAGE, PROTECT, OBSERVE, INTEGRATE... THESE ARE AGE-OLD QUESTIONS, MY DEAR SÄTIE... THINK OF THE FIRE THAT DESTROYED THE GREAT LIBRARY OF ALEXANDRIA!



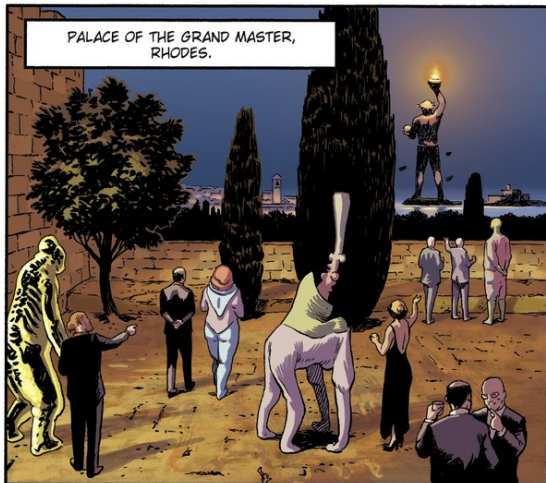
JUST WATCH THE HUMAN HISTORIANS WEEP WITH JOY WHEN THEY FIND OUT WE SAVED NEARLY A THIRD OF THE WORKS FROM THE FLAMES!



AND THERE YOU HAVE IT! I WISH SWÄNN WERE HERE WITH US. HE NEEDS TO RECONNECT WITH THE BEAUTY OF THIS WORLD.



HE'LL BE THERE FOR SHANGHAI, SÄTIE!



PALACE OF THE GRAND MASTER,
RHODES.



SO, CONRAD, THE JIG'S UP
AT LAST? TORGHON IS PULLING
OUT OF RENAISSANCE?

I'M NOT PRIVY
TO THE SECRETS OF
THE HIGHER-UPS, BUT
I CERTAINLY HOPE
THAT WE STAY.



BUT WHAT ABOUT ALL
THE DEATHS? THE HUMANS
WILL CONTINUE TO KILL. IT'S
IN THEIR NATURE!



THERE'S A HUNTING RITUAL
ON TORGHON... IT INVOLVES
CAPTURING A PARTICULARLY
SAVAGE AND DANGEROUS
SEA DRAGON.



WHAT MAKES THE RITE
UNIQUE IS THAT THE HUNTERS
CANNOT KILL THE BEAST: THEIR
WEAPONS ARE NON-LETHAL.
AT THE END, THEY RELEASE
THE DRAGON.



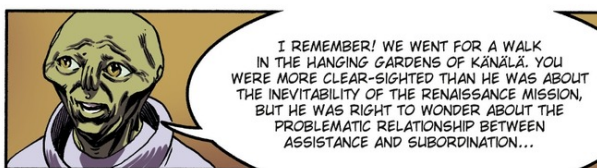
SOMETIMES THE HUNTER
DIES, BUT IT'S A PRIVILEGE JUST
TO HAVE TAKEN PART.

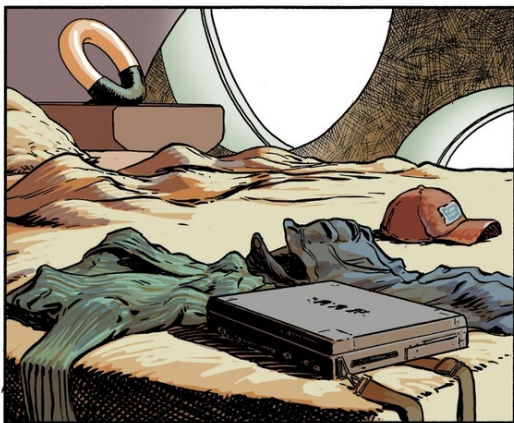


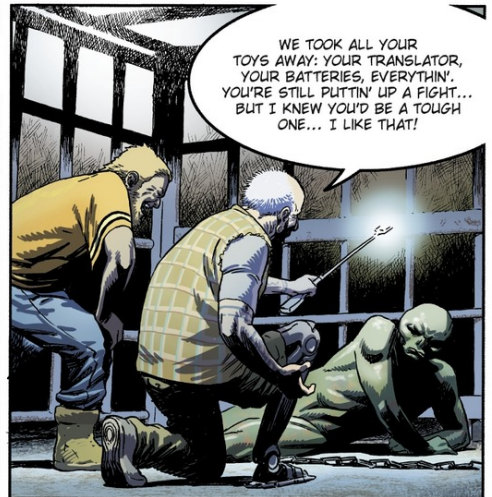
SOMEDAY, ON CARYOPS,
I'LL HAVE YOU TRY A SHRIMP
WHOSE SUCCULENT FLESH IS A
DEADLY POISON IF PREPARED
INCORRECTLY...



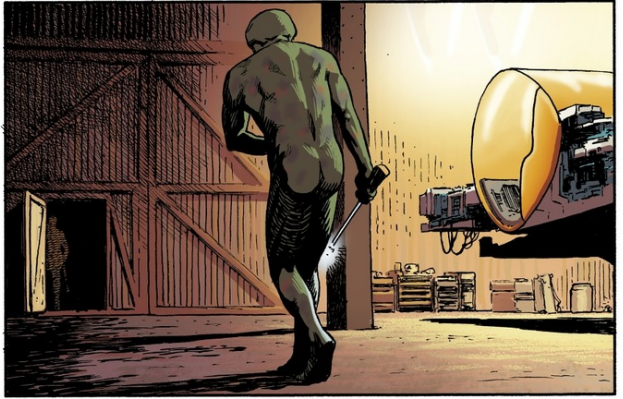
HAVE FUN WITH
YOUR TEN BILLION TERRAN
DRAGONS, CONRAD. I'M
GOING TO LOG OFF. I HAVE
GUESTS AND A DINNER
TO FINISH.



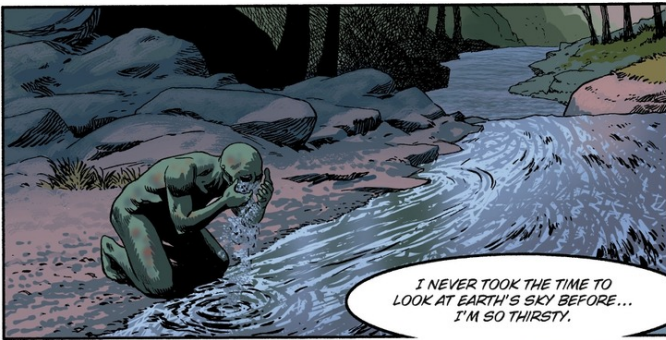
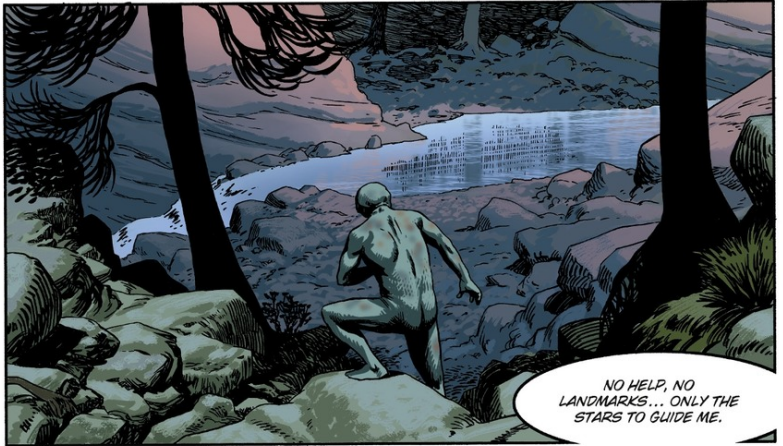




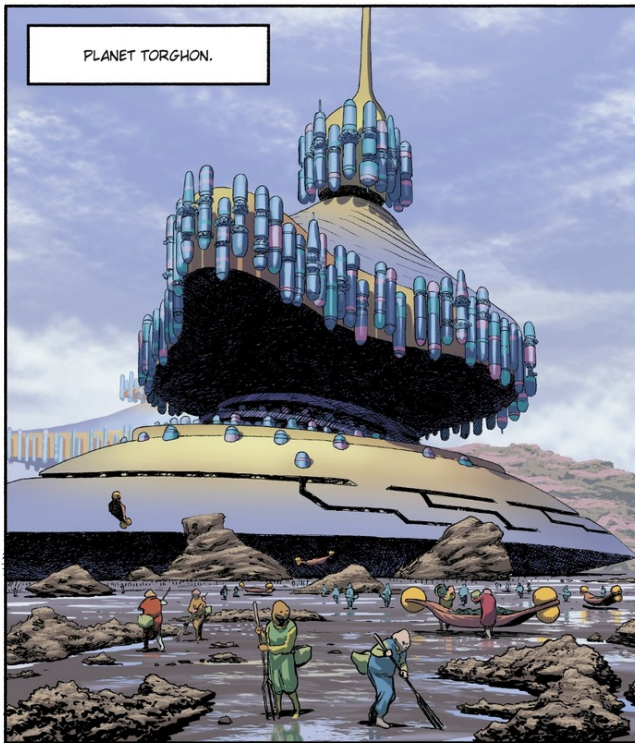








PLANET TORGHON.



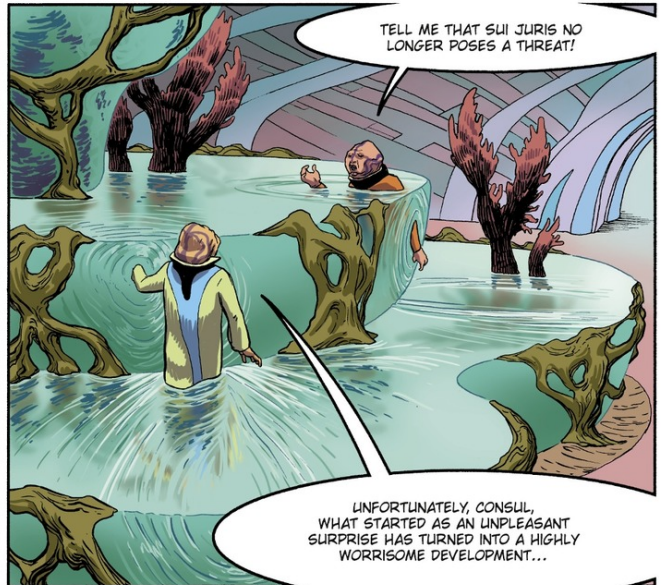
I LOVE LOW TIDE. THE GATHERERS WORKING HASTILY TO COMPLETE THEIR WORK BEFORE THE RETURN OF THE WAVES.

A MEMBER OF THE INVESTIGATION COMMISSION IS HERE, CONSUL.

GOOD, SEND HIM IN.



AH, JASON, PLEASE HAVE A SEAT.

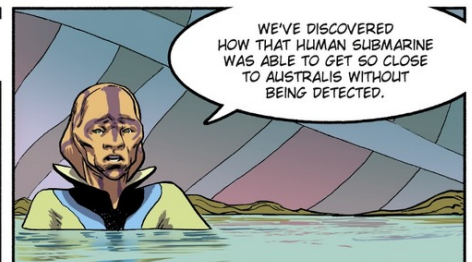


TELL ME THAT SUI JURIS NO LONGER POSES A THREAT!

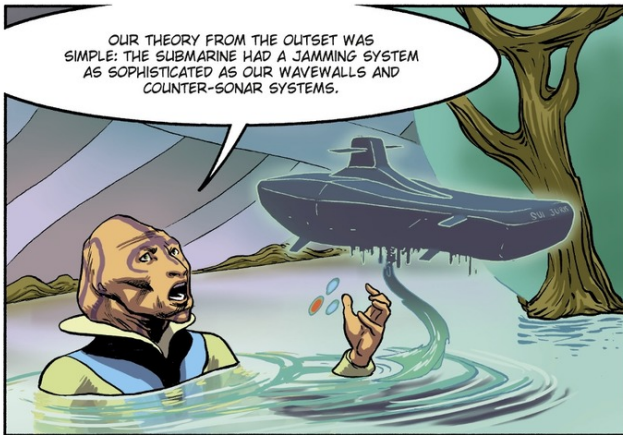
UNFORTUNATELY, CONSUL, WHAT STARTED AS AN UNPLEASANT SURPRISE HAS TURNED INTO A HIGHLY WORRISOME DEVELOPMENT...



AT LEAST IT ISN'T A TOTAL LOSS. THE HUMANS ARE WILLING TO LET US WORK IN SOME OF THEIR DEEP SEA ZONES... WHAT'S YOUR BAD NEWS, JASON?



WE'VE DISCOVERED HOW THAT HUMAN SUBMARINE WAS ABLE TO GET SO CLOSE TO AUSTRALIS WITHOUT BEING DETECTED.



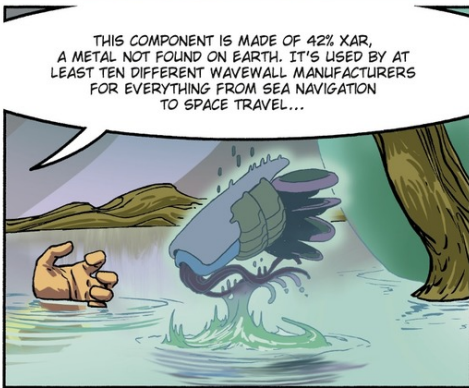
OUR THEORY FROM THE OUTSET WAS SIMPLE: THE SUBMARINE HAD A JAMMING SYSTEM AS SOPHISTICATED AS OUR WAVEWALLS AND COUNTER-SONAR SYSTEMS.



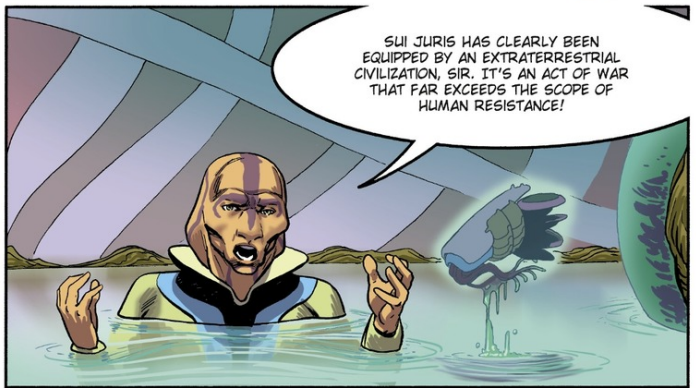
TECHNOLOGY THAT COULDN'T HAVE BEEN MANUFACTURED ON EARTH.



WE NEEDED PROOF TO SUPPORT OUR THEORY. AFTER SEARCHING THE RUBBLE AT GROUND ZERO, WE FINALLY FOUND WHAT WE WERE LOOKING FOR.



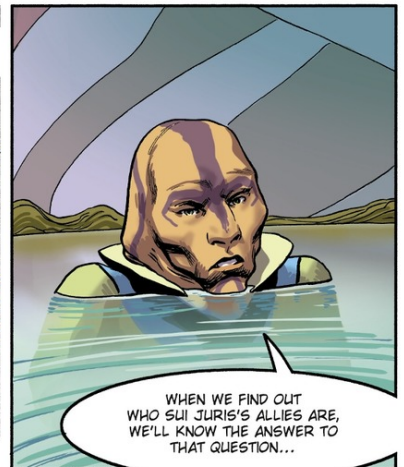
THIS COMPONENT IS MADE OF 42% XAR, A METAL NOT FOUND ON EARTH. IT'S USED BY AT LEAST TEN DIFFERENT WAVEWALL MANUFACTURERS FOR EVERYTHING FROM SEA NAVIGATION TO SPACE TRAVEL...



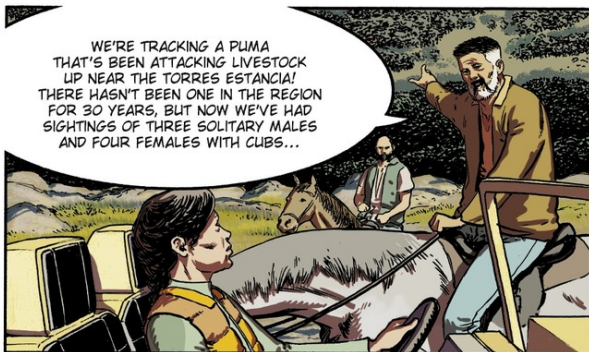
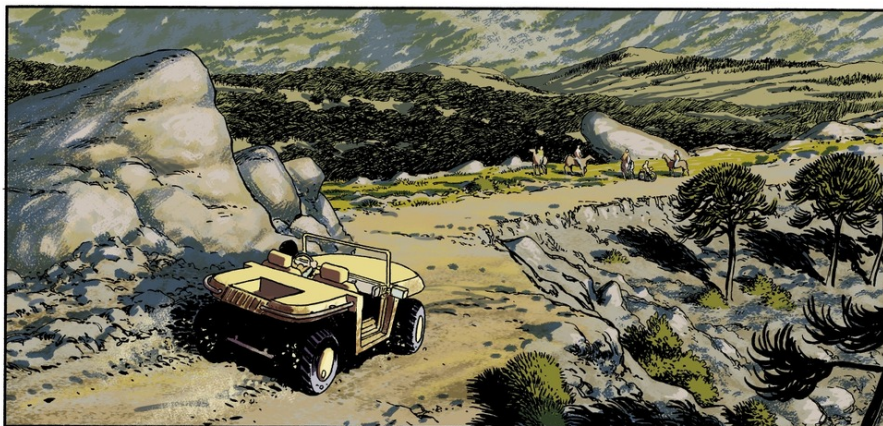
SUI JURIS HAS CLEARLY BEEN EQUIPPED BY AN EXTRATERRESTRIAL CIVILIZATION, SIR. IT'S AN ACT OF WAR THAT FAR EXCEEDS THE SCOPE OF HUMAN RESISTANCE!

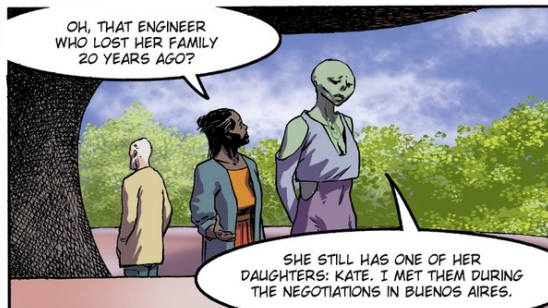
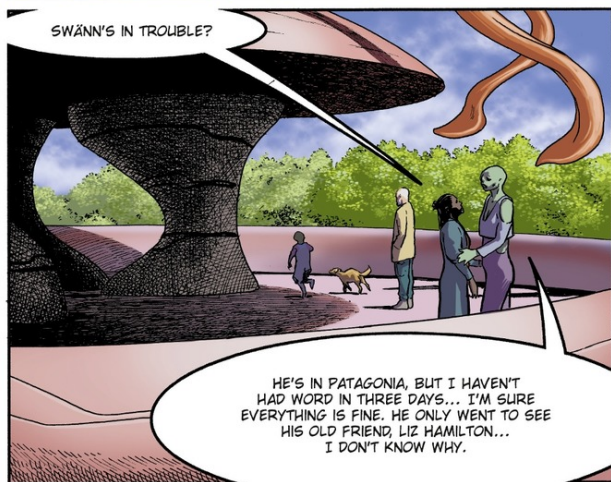


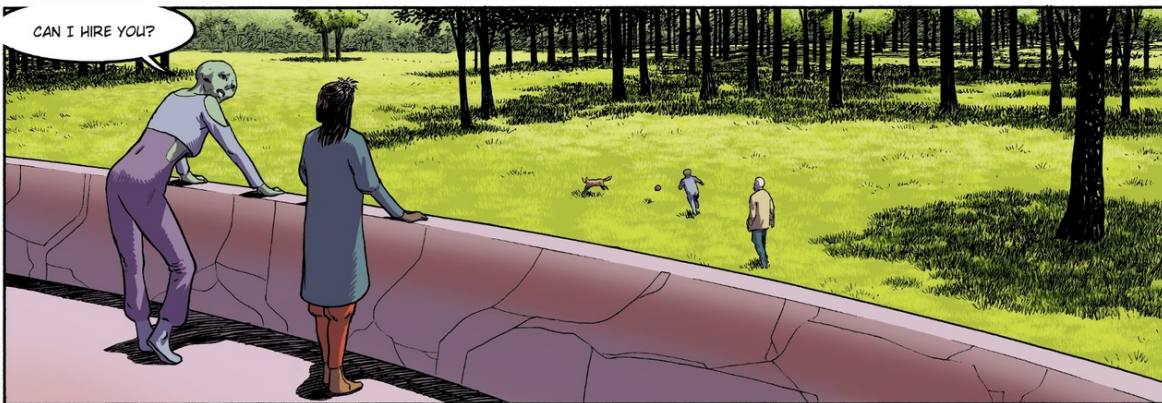
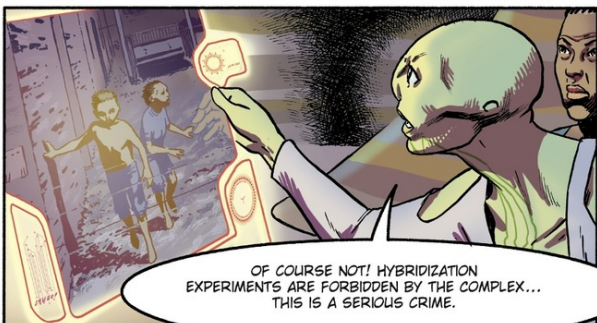
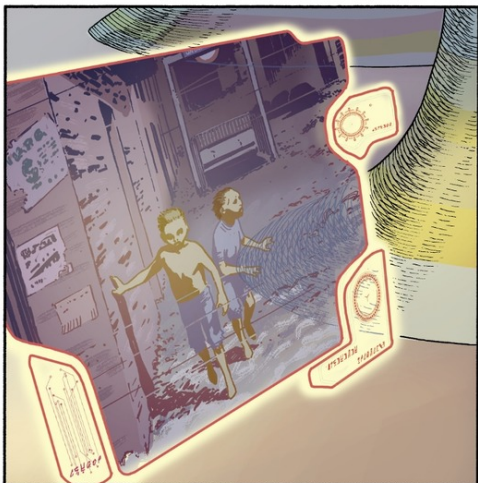
HOW CAN SUCH AN INSIGNIFICANT PLANET BE AT THE CENTER OF AN INTERGALACTIC CRISIS! IT MAKES NO SENSE!

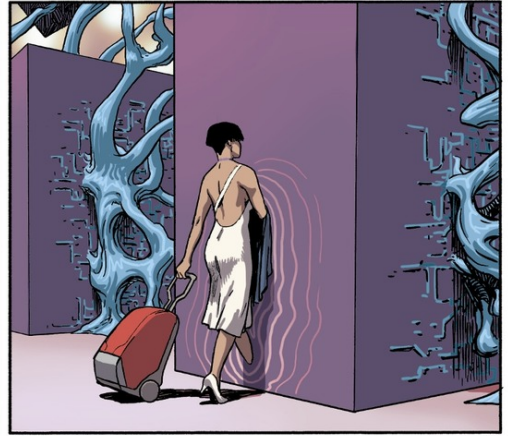
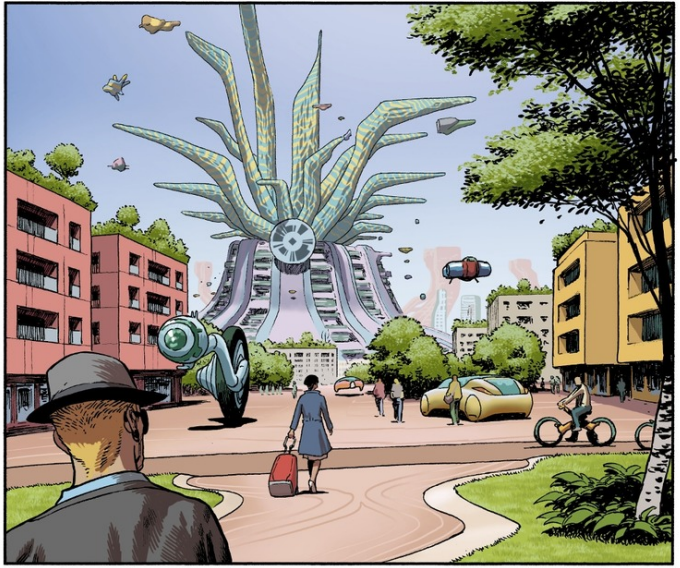


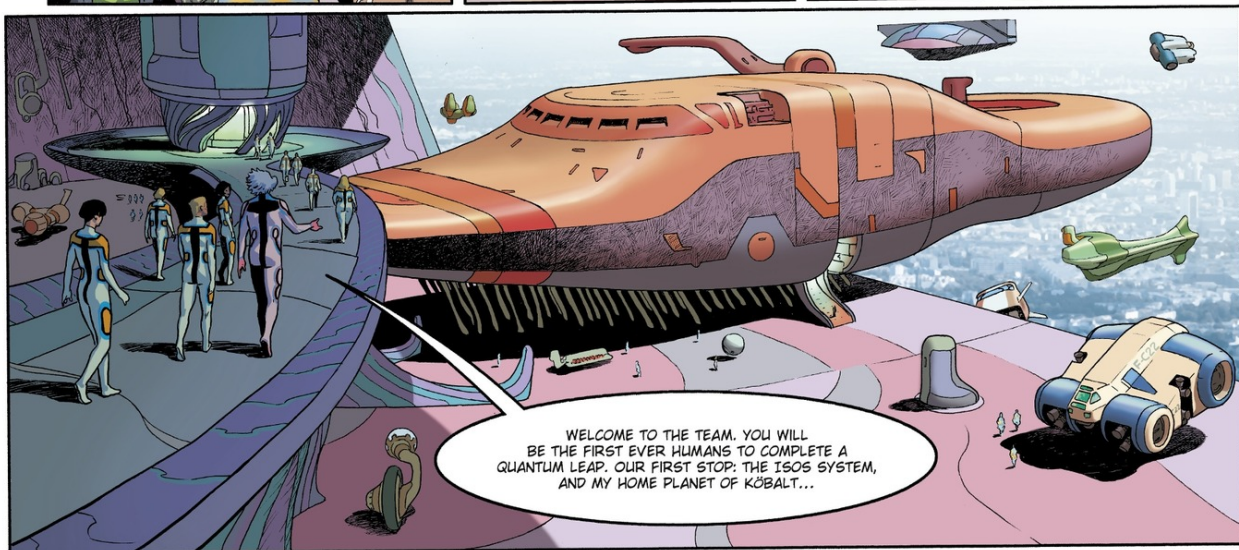
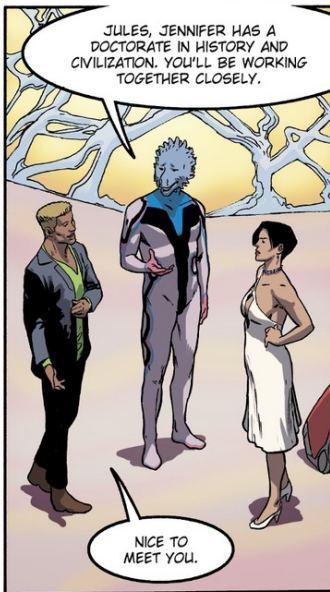
WHEN WE FIND OUT WHO SUI JURIS'S ALLIES ARE, WE'LL KNOW THE ANSWER TO THAT QUESTION...











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